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PAUL AS APOLOGIST - submitted by Hilary Margaret Ellis

This thesis presents Paul in his role as apologist for the early Christian Gospel. The form and content of the Pauline letters are examined in the light of apologetic traditions. Paul follows the rules for composition of apologia as expounded in the classical 'art' of rhetoric. (Romans and 1 Corinthians are seen as deliberative apologies; Galatians and 2 Corinthians as forensic apologies). Paul also uses, adapts and rejects elements of Hellenistic - Jewish apologetic to suit his purposes. He employs typological interpretation in his presentation of the Old Testament figure of Abraham in a similar way to Philo and Josephus, but he rejects their presentation of Moses as an all-important Old Testament figure because he foresaw that this entailed acceptance of Jewish legalism.

The arguments used by Paul, and their acceptance in the early Christian Churches enabled Christianity to break free of Jewish legalism, while retaining its base in the Old Testament scriptures. Paul interprets the scriptures to establish and 'prove' his understanding of Christianity. The successful apologist presents his case positively so as to win favour, and defends his case against opposition and attack. Paul accomplishes the 'apologetic' presentation of Christianity in both these respects: in the positive exposition of the Gospel to all, both Jew and Greek, and also in the defence of his position and authority as 'apostle of Christ' in the face of personal attack.

A survey of Justin Martyr's work shows the use Justin makes of Paul's apologetic argumentation and the influence he had on subsequent generations of Christian apologists.

" PAUL AS APOLOGIST "

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17 MAY 1984

Paul as Apologist

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" P A U L   A S   A P O L O G I S T "Introduction

To present Paul as an apologist for the early Christian Gospel entails a study of the Pauline Letters, their form and content, in the light of such 'apologetic' traditions as the rhetorical 'Art' of persuasion, including both the forensic defence, and the political or educational deliberation; also the Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic propaganda as exemplified by Philo and Josephus, which was designed to defend the beliefs and institutions of Judaism, and to give a positive presentation of this Semitic religion and way of life to the Hellenistic World.

In positive terms, the successful apologist must present what he believes to be the truth persuasively so as to win the favour of his audience or readers, convincing them of the sincerity and truth of what he says, thereby compelling them to accept his message. The negative aspect of apologetics is the defence against accusations, opposition, attacks and even persecution: both in the form of personal slight, and that directed against the substance of the message.

Paul accomplishes the 'apologetic' presentation of Christianity in both these respects: in the positive exposition of the Gospel to all, both Jew and Greek; and also in the defence of his own position and authority as 'apostle of Christ' in the face of bitter, personal attacks.

In estimating Paul's success as an apologist, it must be noted that through his positive presentation of the Gospel and his



combating 'heretical' tendencies and extremes (both Jewish legalism and gnostic libertinism), Christianity retained a base in Judaism and the Old Testament scriptures, while expanding its appeal and compass into the Graeco-Roman world.

Paul's personal defensive stand established his position as 'apostle to the Gentiles'; while his argumentation and approach are taken up by the apostolic fathers, and by one specifically termed an apologist for Christianity, Justin Martyr.

Since this investigation was begun, in complete independence, a similar line of study has been very effectively pursued by Professor H. D. Betz. A number of his articles have been used to confirm points made in this thesis; unfortunately his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians appeared too late to be consulted.

## Chapter 1

### The Art of Persuasion in the Ancient World

In this chapter I aim at providing a survey of the main points of the traditional rhetorical theory of the ancient world; and to show how such rhetorical guidelines pervaded literary as well as oratorical activity. No attempt is being made to present a full account of the various Greek and Latin rhetorical systems; rather I will select those parts of rhetorical theory which help to determine Paul's position in relation to his contemporary literary environment.

"Where shall I begin, please your majesty?", asked the white rabbit.

"Begin at the beginning", said the king gravely, "and go on until you reach the end".<sup>1</sup>

Good advice for the advocate, but it would hardly satisfy those in the ancient world where rhetorical theory and rules were extensive and detailed.

In the ancient world rhetoric governed, not only public speaking, but also an extensive field including literature, sermons, political speeches and pamphlets, educational and philosophical treatises etc., in fact, wherever 'persuasion' was the aim, then rhetoric would almost certainly be present.

The elaborate systems of the rhetoricians taught the student how to find something to say, how to select and organise his material, and how to phrase it in the best possible way.

Rhetorical theorists, represented in this chapter by Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian, are by no means mere tricksters with words;

rather they are serious thinkers and show the intellectual respectability that rhetoric enjoyed in the Hellenistic world, notwithstanding the inherent dangers in the power of oratory which were pointed to especially by Socrates and Plato in opposition to the Sophists.

Cicero, in delineating the ideal orator, insists that 'to begin with, a knowledge of very many matters must be grasped, without which oratory is but an empty and ridiculous swirl of verbiage'.<sup>2</sup> The good orator had to be an educated man with the ability to argue persuasively. Rhetoric was not only an intellectual theory for proceeding thus, it was also the culmination of valuable experience in public debate and law that had begun with the democracy of the Greek city state which had provided the opportunity for the development of the art of public speaking.

It is important to understand that rhetorical theory of which I will give a brief summary below, is a system of gathering, arranging and expressing material which represents a positive approach to problems of composition. Primarily an art of 'building up' something, the rules of rhetoric can also be of analytical value for 'breaking down' what has been composed. It enables us to be aware of the artifice that goes into a composition of a discourse, thereby making us better equipped to analyse what other writers have done to achieve their efforts, and in the case of this thesis, to understand better the rules governing and guiding Paul in the composition of his letters.

The practice of the 'art' of rhetoric antedates its codification. There is ample evidence in extant Greek literature that rhetoric,

conceived of as persuasive oratory, figured prominently in Hellenistic society many years before the first handbook of rhetorical precepts was compiled. The prominence of speeches and debates in the Homeric epics, in the plays of the Greek dramatists, and in the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, amply shows that the influence of persuasive discourse was prevalent in the ancient Greek civilisation.

The writing of the first systematic handbook is assigned to Corax of Syracuse in the fifth century BC<sup>3</sup>; and in the history of the subject of rhetoric, Gorgias of Leontini is noted as stirring up interest in oratorical theory and practice among the Athenians, and being perhaps the first successful sophist in Athens.

Isocrates and Aristotle are two of the most influential figures in the history of Greek rhetoric. Isocrates set up a successful school of oratory, charging high fees, which aroused the suspicions of Plato concerning the practice of the 'art of rhetoric'. Plato criticised the sophist teachers for accepting fees for their teaching. As Corbett<sup>4</sup> points out, 'the many derogatory remarks about this art down through the ages have their roots in 'Plato's strictures'. Ironically, however, in his depreciation of the 'art', Plato shows himself to be a master of rhetoric and his works are carefully composed and constructed in accordance with rhetorical guidelines.

### Plato

Plato's attacks on sophistical rhetoric are concentrated particularly in the Dialogues of Phaedrus and Gorgias, but for

the purposes of this survey, Plato's main contribution lies in his composition, 'The Apology of Socrates', which purports to be a record of the speech delivered by Socrates at his trial. It is a treatise which aptly shows Plato's skill in rhetorical composition, and is an excellent example of defensive, persuasive discourse.

Plato assumes that the aim of all rhetorical discourse is persuasiveness - the ability to lead the minds of the hearers to follow a particular belief or action. For the attainment of this result he insists that the advocate must possess knowledge of the truth about which he speaks, and some insight into the minds of those he seeks to persuade. This can then be supplemented by a knowledge of the different kinds of argument, and by various forms and figures of speech. In the Phaedrus, Plato writes:

"Every discourse must be organised, like a human body, with a body of its own, as it were not to be headless or footless, but to have a middle and members, composed in fitting relation to each other and to the whole." <sup>5</sup>

### 'The Apology of Socrates'.

In 399 BC, at the age of seventy, Socrates was brought to trial in Athens, ostensibly on the charge that he was corrupting the youth and advocating the worship of new gods; but really because he had become a troublesome citizen with his questioning of the policies and values of the Athenian establishment.

It is widely held that Plato's 'Apology' is not an authentic record of any speech delivered by Socrates in court. R. Hackforth <sup>6</sup>

argues that in fact what was needed from Plato was not the defence that had failed at the time, but a better defense which might be made for Socrates at a later date. Plato's principal object would then be to incorporate a general interpretation of Socrates' life and personality, and particularly of his services to Athens. Similarly, it is claimed by L. R. Shero<sup>7</sup> that Plato wished to present not only a defence of Socrates against the charges which had been brought against him, but also an arraignment of the Athenian public which had put Socrates to death, a eulogy of the master, and a portrait of the ideal sage. If this is the case, then the purpose of the speech presented by Plato, is to show Socrates in a favourable and appealing way to posterity.

In the opening paragraph of the Apology, Socrates is setting the tone of the ethical appeal which is exerted throughout the speech. With ironic modesty, Socrates praises the eloquence of his accusers and depreciates his own skill as an orator. Lacking rhetorical skill, he will place his confidence in the justice of the cause, trusting that the recital of the truth will exonerate him:

"I was most amazed by one of the many lies that they told - when they said that you must be on your guard not to be deceived by me because I was a clever speaker. For I thought it the most shameless part of their conduct that they are not ashamed because they will immediately be convicted by me of falsehood by the evidence of the fact when I show myself to be not in the least a clever speaker, unless indeed they call him a clever speaker who speaks



the truth." <sup>8</sup>

Socrates divides the charges into general classes, the ancient and the recent accusations, and he indicates the general organisation of the defence by saying that he will answer these two groups of charges in turn.

Answering the ancient charges, Socrates specifies what he is accused of; he is charged with being a student of natural philosophy and being a teacher of doctrines and taking money for his teaching. Socrates denies the charge, maintaining that he has never engaged in speculations about physical matters. For confirmation of his claim, he calls for the testimony of those present. "Speak then", he says, "You who have heard me, inform one another ... if anyone ever heard me talking much or little about such matters". This invitation meets with a stony silence from the audience. The implication of this is that there is no evidence to substantiate the 'ancient' charge - it is simply not true.

Nor is there any evidence to substantiate the charge that he is a teacher who accepts money for his services. After denying this charge, Socrates makes use of analogy, reasoning that it would not be considered a crime if a trainer took a fee for improving foals or calves, there is no reason why it should be considered a crime if a teacher takes money for improving the minds of young people.

Socrates then goes on to consider the reason why false charges have been levelled against him. He suggests that their origin lies in the disrespect and prejudice surrounding the sophists, and also in the enmity he caused when he exposed those who

considered themselves to be wise. This stemmed from the pronouncement of the Delphic oracle which said that no man was wiser than Socrates. Reasoning that the god must be right, because a god cannot lie, Socrates asked in what sense he was the wisest of men. He moves on to recount how he set about testing the truth of the oracle by examining those who had a great reputation in Athens for wisdom. He says that he discovered their boasted wisdom was really ignorance, and concluded that he was wiser than they in that he was conscious that he knew nothing. Calling the god of Delphi as his witness, Socrates asserts:

"The fact is, gentlemen, it is likely that the god is really wise and by his oracle means this; 'human wisdom is of little or no value ... This one of you, O human beings, is wisest, who, like Socrates, recognises that he is in truth of no account in respect to wisdom'." <sup>9</sup>

It is this rather paradoxical superiority that accounts for the animosity against Socrates. The pretenders to knowledge, made bitter by their exposure, accuse Socrates, so that it is prejudice which can be seen to be behind the wild and indiscriminate charges, or so Socrates argues.

The second part of Socrates' defence answers the specific charge of his being a corrupter of the young and a doer of evil, and of setting up new gods. The defence strategy is designed to reverse the charges and direct them against Meletus, Socrates' accuser. This reversal of the charge is a device recommended by the classical rhetoricians - it puts the accuser on the defensive and takes the pressure off the defendant.

Socrates examines the justice of the charge that he is a corrupter of youth. He uses the common 'topic' of contraries - if he is a corrupter of the young then some must be improvers of the young, and who are they? Socrates gets Meletus to affirm that the judges, the audience, the senators, the members of the assembly, in fact, all Athenians except Socrates, improve the youth. Socrates then proceeds to reduce this claim to absurdity.

Approaching the charges from another angle, Socrates is able to turn the accusations around. By demonstrating the absurdity of Meletus' charge, Socrates proves that Meletus could not have made those charges seriously and that he is therefore the real doer of evil.

In similar fashion Socrates demonstrates the inconsistency of the charge that he is an atheist. He gets Meletus to admit that one cannot believe in humanity without believing in human beings, in horsemanship without believing in horses etc; in other words, one cannot believe in the genus without believing in the species. One cannot, therefore, believe in divine agencies of any kind, and remember the charge that Socrates advocates new gods, without believing in spirits and demi-gods. So the charge that Socrates does not believe in the gods is completely false.

Much of the strategy employed in the cross-examination of Meletus was aimed at minimising his ethical appeal. As well as refuting the charges, Socrates intended to show that Meletus is not a man of good sense and good will.

After these refutations of the charges, Socrates goes on to

point out that during his lifetime he has incurred the enmity of many people, and it is this and not the specific indictments which will convict him. The formal refutation of the specific charges which were supposed to have prompted the speech, is sandwiched between the two main lines of defence of Socrates' character, dealing with the popular prejudice which really accused and convicted him, and the vindication of his career. This vindication takes the form of describing a career aimed at the moral reformation of fellow citizens, undertaken at divine bidding, and carried out without regard to dangerous consequences to his own person. Ethical appeal is effected by the assertion of the moral and unselfish motives of the defendant:

"And so, men of Athens, I am now making my defense not for my own sake, as one might imagine, but far more for yours, that you may not by condemning me err in your treatment of the gift God gave you." <sup>10</sup>

Plato's apology for Socrates uses the historical setting of a court and the form of an epideictic defence speech, in order to present a flattering portrait of the 'master' in the face of misrepresentation and popular criticism of him. A rather different apologetic approach is found in Plato's 'Letter VII', <sup>11</sup> though this again is a defensive stand for the beliefs and actions of a 'master'.

#### 'Letter VII'.

This is the longest and probably the most important of the letters that are ascribed to the hand of Plato. The letter purports to be a message of friendly advice and council to its addressees,

but in fact it is a description and defence of a whole course of events, and of Plato's involvement in the political affairs of Sicily. It constitutes an elaborate apology 'pro vita sua', and contains a long digression dealing with Plato's views on philosophy and teaching.

Evidently the author is meeting hostile criticism, and the argument is convincing that suggests that this was originally an open letter with the explicit intention of defending a particular course of action. If this was the case then this is an apology written formally in letter form, the superscription being a literary device, and the ending is readily understandable when it asserts:

"If, therefore, the account I have now given appears to anyone more rational, and if anyone believes that it supplies sufficient excuses for what took place, then I shall regard the account as both reasonable and sufficient." <sup>12</sup>

Letter VII is probably not a genuine composition of Plato, but an interpretation of Plato's life and doctrine written after his death. For the purposes of this chapter, the significance of Letter VII lies not in the question of its authorship, but in the form and intent of the composition - the fact that it is an apology purposely framed in the form of a letter.

### Aristotle

The creator of an early, systematic 'art' of rhetoric was Aristotle. His work on rhetoric is in three books; the first deals with the means of persuasion, the logical proofs based on

dialectic; the second with the psychological or ethical proofs, based on a knowledge of human emotions and their causes and of different kinds of character; and the third book treats the question of style and arrangement.

Aristotle's 'Rhetorica' is dated c.330 B.C. and according to Cicero, Aristotle, '... put the whole of his system of philosophy in a polished and brilliant form, and linked scientific study of facts with practice in style'.<sup>13</sup>

One of Aristotle's purposes in composing his handbook of rhetoric was to counteract Plato's low estimation of the persuasive art. By concentrating in the first two books of his 'Art of Rhetoric', on the discovering and creation of argumentation, Aristotle sought to answer those who accused rhetoricians of being more concerned with words than matter, and he hoped to show that rhetoric was not, as Plato had accused it of being, a mere 'knack', but that it was a true art and systematic discipline which could guide men in adapting means to an end.

Aristotle recognised that 'probability' is the all important element in persuasion. Verifiable truth fell within the province of science or logic, but in dealing with contingent human affairs, the orator often had to base his arguments on opinions and on what men believed to be true. Aristotle removed the 'success at any price' emphasis that had brought rhetoric into disrepute, and 'became the fountainhead of all later rhetorical theory'.

The decline of the city state after Alexander the Great had a corresponding effect on the study and development of rhetoric, for oratory tended to become divorced from practical affairs, and

became an eloquent accomplishment rather than a weapon for use in the law courts and politics. As the practical form of oratory declined, its place was taken by the rhetoric of the schools which was characterised by a highly artificial and exaggerated style. Generally speaking, rhetorical teaching did not encroach on the philosophical, but it was the return to the orator-statesman who was also a philosopher and widely educated, that became fashionable by the time of Cicero, and effected a revival of rhetorical theory combined with the practice of oratory, and it was from Rome that rhetoric once more came into its own.

### Cicero

Cicero was one of the outstanding figures in the history of advocacy, and his published speeches contain some of the most brilliant examples of the use of the persuasive art. He also had a wide knowledge of literature and a thorough grasp of the political and philosophical thought of his time. As an orator Cicero is supreme, and as a correspondent he served as a model for later generations; while his work expounding the 'art' of rhetoric and persuasion illustrates admirably the complexity of the task confronting the would-be orator. For this reason, it will be profitable to consider the example of Cicero's oratorical powers.

As a lawyer appearing for the defense, Cicero first made his mark with the case of Sextus Roscius <sup>14</sup>. This speech is representative of Cicero's brilliance in his own judicial work. It shows the pattern, proportion and argumentation, together with the essential appeal which counted for so much in forensic oratory.

To appreciate the boldness of Cicero in actually making this defence, one should bear in mind the ruthlessness of the military commanders of the time, and especially the cruelty of the dictator Sulla.

During Cicero's early life the Roman world had known much civil strife, with the sword playing a decisive role in Roman politics. In the decade immediately preceding this trial Rome had been divided into bitter factions by the warfare between Marius and Sulla; the victor was Sulla whose acts of reprisal were particularly cruel. It was under such a military dictator and in fact against him that Cicero dared to make his first public defence.

The accused Sextus Roscius had severely criticised an order for the sale of his father's estate for a trifling sum to Chrysogonus, one of Sulla's men. Sulla, enraged at this public censure, lent his influence to Chrysogonus who instituted a prosecution against Sextus, accusing him of murdering his own father. In the opening of his speech for the defence Cicero foils the charge of presumption that his appearance might create. The opening of the speech which is so important for creating the initial impression and setting the ethical tone of the defence is presented by Cicero in masterly fashion:

"Gentlemen of the jury, you probably wonder why, when so many eminent orators and illustrious citizens remain seated it is I, rather than any of them, who have risen to speak, though neither in age, or ability, nor authority, can I be compared to them.

.... I have been chosen before the others, not as the most



gifted orator .... I have been chosen not that Sextus Roscius might be adequately defended, but to prevent his being altogether abandoned." <sup>15</sup>

Cicero cleverly proclaimed his inexperience as a shield against the jealousy of the older lawyers and severity of the dictator, and at the same time condemned them. This tone and line of arguing is maintained as Cicero goes on, with a courteous gesture to the prosecutor, to lay the blame for the crime squarely on the shoulders of the accuser, who, he said, planned the murder in order to obtain the estate. This clever strategy divided the opposing forces; he absolves Sulla from responsibility on account of his absorption in affairs of state, but pictures the crimes of Chrysogonus as so terrible that none could defend them. He analysed the facts as set out in the prosecution, and marshalled them not only to defend Roscius but also to accuse the prosecutors. He balanced the history of the character of his client against the character of the accuser as disclosed in the crime. Finally, his conclusion identified the fate of Roscius with the fate of the Republic, and thus elevated the defence of the individual to the defence of the ancient rights and liberties of Rome. Using the technique of flattery to the full Cicero makes the climactic appeal:

"It behoves wise men, furnished with the authority and power which you possess, to apply the most effective remedies to the evils from which the republic especially suffers ... Banish this cruelty from the state, Gentlemen; do not allow it to stalk abroad any longer in this republic ...". <sup>16</sup>

Roscius was acquitted and Cicero's speech acclaimed as a masterpiece of polemic.

This is a glimpse of Cicero putting into practice the theory which he later wrote down and explained. Cicero believed that rhetorical theory sprang from practice in public speaking and not the other way round. Rhetoric only reduces to a system the arguments and turns of speech which have proved to be effective. Furthermore, it was not enough for Cicero that an orator should expound and charm, he must also be able to move the minds and bend the wills of his hearers.

The 'De Oratore' was composed by Cicero specifically to deal with the rules of rhetoric. It is written in the form of a conversation, but it is a dialogue where the facts are regarded as already ascertained and doctrines expounded as dogmatic truths. The dialogue form is employed to exhibit the many-sided nature of the subject; if differing opinions about it are introduced, the parts of them considered by Cicero as valid, are accepted and incorporated into his system.

Cicero begins by pointing out that great orators are rare, and explains that this is because of the difficulty of the 'art' which calls for wide knowledge, command of language, psychological insight, humour, good memory and good delivery. The reader is led through the basic oratorical training procedure<sup>17</sup>, beginning with a school course in rhetoric, treating the purpose of oratory, the classification of subjects etc. The three types of oratory are described, and the five considerations within them are discussed - invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery. The division

of the individual speech is described, and the rules of diction to be observed in delivering it:

"I learned that he (the orator) must first hit upon what to say; then manage and marshal his discoveries, not merely in an orderly fashion, but with a discriminating eye for the exact weight of each argument; next go on to array them in the adornment of style; after that keep them guarded in his memory; and in the end deliver them with effect and charm.

..... Before speaking on the issue, we must first secure the goodwill of the audience; then state our case; afterwards define the dispute; then establish our own allegations; subsequently disprove the other side; and in our peroration expand and reinforce all that was in our favour while we weakened and demolished whatever went to support our opponent's." 18

The 'De Oratore' deals with the foundation of rhetorical theory, and there are two works written later which supplement it. The 'Brutus' gives a historical exemplification, while the 'Orator' delineates a picture of the ideal orator. The 'Brutus' and the 'Orator' are both controversial in nature provoked by Atticist criticism of Cicero's approach to oratory and his style of speaking. These two works by Cicero are answering a challenge, and defend his own views of oratory and indeed his own position as an orator.

In the 'Brutus' Cicero appeals to the record of Roman oratory to demonstrate the correctness of his views. The 'Orator' is

designed to round off the discussion of questions raised by earlier works. The treatise is a defence of Cicero's own practice and oratorical career - a self-apology - and significantly it is written in the form of a letter which is addressed to Brutus.

The respective contributions to the art of rhetoric made by Aristotle and Cicero are decisive in establishing the respectability and popularity of rhetoric. The same is also true of a third prominent name in the history of rhetoric, that of Quintilian, whose work I now go on to consider.

### Quintilian

Quintilian lived and worked in the first century AD. In his time rhetoric had three distinguishable aspects: it was an intellectual system and as such the object of much laborious and detailed exposition; it was an important educational discipline; and it was also still used as an effective weapon by the statesman and advocate as an aid to winning power and influencing others.

Quintilian was a competent academic rhetorician, and an eminent teacher and educational theorist. He was not a political orator, but had enjoyed success as an advocate in the law courts, and was fully aware of the factors that made for professional success. Quintilian's originality lay largely in the fact that he interpreted the art of rhetoric as including educational training in its widest sense and extending from the earliest years of a child's development.

Quintilian's great work the 'Institutio Oratoria' leaves one with

the impression of a kindly and humane character, although much of the book is highly technical in its description of the 'education of the ideal orator'.<sup>19</sup>

Quintilian justifies the rhetorical training that is given in the school:

"The general opinion is that the untrained speaker is usually the more vigorous. This opinion is due primarily to the erroneous judgement of faulty critics who think that true vigour is all the greater for its lack of art ... The uninstructed sometimes appear to have a richer flow of language because they say everything that can be said, while the learned exercise discrimination and self-restraint."<sup>20</sup>

The 'Institutio Oratoria' gives detailed descriptions and examples of the various kinds of pleading, and the presentation and argumentation most suited to them. It further expounds the divisions of the speech and their arrangement, with hints on how to achieve the required effect in the highest degree. Rather than give a detailed account of the work of Quintilian, the following is a survey of the 'Art of Rhetoric' as outlined by Quintilian, together with Cicero and Aristotle. It is a survey of those rules and the theory which governed the presentation of a defence or a deliberative discourse, as laid down in the classical systems.

In the rhetorical systems, three types of persuasive discourse are delineated: the deliberative, the forensic and the epideictic.

### Deliberative Oratory

The deliberative discourse is otherwise known as the political, or advisory. In this type of discourse the orator or writer 'deliberated' about something of public interest, or a political question; or more generally, it aimed to persuade someone to do something, or accept a particular point of view.

According to Aristotle <sup>21</sup> this type of discourse was always concerned with the future - the point at issue being whether some course of action be taken - its special topics were the expedient or inexpedient, and its means were exhortation and dehortation.

A handbook of rhetoric titled 'Rhetorica Ad Herennium' <sup>22</sup> which belongs close in time to Cicero's writings, describes in some detail the main topics that are included in deliberative speeches. The author notes that deliberative speaking generally concerns a choice between two or more courses of action, and should therefore centre on the delineation of the 'right' one; this would include relating to topics such as wisdom, justice, courage and temperance.

Quintilian's work is mostly given over to the exposition of forensic pleading, but he does give some account of the deliberative. Whereas Aristotle said deliberative speaking was always concerned with the future, Quintilian notes that it must also be concerned with the defence of some action or way of thinking, as well as its recommendation. He says that it 'deliberates about the future, but also enquires about the past; its function being to advise or dissuade' <sup>23</sup>. Quintilian also points out that the most important factor in deliberative oratory is the standing and

authority of the speaker or writer himself: "For he, who would have all men trust his judgement as to what is expedient and honorable should both possess and be regarded as possessing genuine wisdom and excellence of character." <sup>24</sup>

### Forensic Oratory

The forensic type of oratory is mainly concerned with legal and judicial matters. This was the oratory of the law court, but it is also extended to cover any kind of oratory or discourse in which a person seeks to defend or attack the actions or teaching of another.

According to Aristotle, <sup>25</sup> forensic oratory was concerned with past time - with actions or crimes that have already taken place. Its special topics were justice and injustice, and its means accusation and defence.

### Epidictic Oratory

Epidictic oratory is also known as demonstrative or ceremonial pleading. It is the oratory of display and charm. It is not so much concerned with persuading an audience in anything, as with pleasing or inspiring it, therefore it is usually the most ornate of the three types of rhetorical discourse. Aristotle had to strain to fit a proper time province to this form of oratory, but he assigned it neatly to the present <sup>26</sup>; its special topics were honour and dishonour, and its means praise and blame.

A more comprehensive view of epidictic oratory included the 'occasional speech'. Speech-making of this character - the

occasional address, was cultivated by the Greeks. It includes a wide range of treatment - eg. circumstances in life, poetic style etc.

According to Aristotle, these three kinds of persuasive discourse - deliberative, forensic and epideictic, correspond to three kinds of hearers: the judge of the future, the judge of the past, and the spectator of the orator's speech and skill <sup>27</sup>.

Rhetorical theory laid down guidelines and gave advice on how to convince or persuade an audience or judge. These rules governed all three types of oratory, and were also followed in the composition of written treatises. The rhetorical systems expound the various means of proofs and modes of persuasion that are available to the speaker or writer.

The branches of study within rhetorical theory come under five headings which are clearly set out in the Handbook of rhetoric called the 'Rhetorica Ad Herennium':

"The speaker should possess the faculties of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.

Invention is the devising of matter, true or plausible, that would make the case convincing.

Arrangement is the ordering and distribution of the matter, making clear the place to which each thing is to be assigned.

Style is the adaptation of suitable words and sentences to the matter devised.

Memory is the firm retention in the mind, of the matter, words and arrangement.



Delivery is the graceful regulation of the voice, countenance and gesture." 28

In describing, albeit briefly, the main elements of the classical 'art' of rhetoric, some expansion of the traditional five headings must be undertaken, but shall concentrate mainly on that of arrangement, as this will be seen later to be the most relevant and useful when looking at the apologetic letters of Paul in relation to the prevalent rhetorical theories governing compositions of apologies.

### Invention

Aristotle in Book I of 'Rhetorica' distinguishes two main kinds of persuasive means that were available to the speaker; first the 'non-artistic' proofs. These did not have to be 'invented' by the orator, who merely had to make effective use of them. They included laws, witnesses, contracts, oaths etc. The second mode of persuasion were the 'artistic' proofs which had to be sought or 'invented' by the orator, who used either rational appeal (logos), emotional appeal (pathos) or ethical appeal (ethos).

In exercising the rational mode of persuasion, the speaker appealed to his audience's reason or understanding. He argued the case either deductively or inductively: that is, he either drew conclusions from statements made, or made generalisations after observing analogous facts (enthymeme and example).

The second mode of persuasion was the emotional appeal.

Aristotle wished that rhetoric could deal exclusively with the rational appeal, but he recognised that the emotions can often

prompt men to do something where reason cannot. So he devoted the second book of his 'Art of Rhetoric' to an analysis of the more common human emotions, noting how the orator could trigger off or subdue these emotions to secure his ends.

The ethical appeal stemmed from the character of the speaker especially as that character is evinced in the speech itself.

A man ingratiated himself with his audience, and thereby gained their trust and admiration. This ethical appeal could be the most potent of the three means of persuasion, for all the orator's skill in convincing the intellect and moving the will of an audience could prove futile if the audience did not esteem and trust the speaker <sup>29</sup>.

The branch of rhetorical theory which comes under the heading of 'invention', was a systematised way of turning up and generating ideas on some subject. It was the method that the classical rhetoricians devised to aid the speaker in discovering matter for the three modes of appeal (logos, pathos and ethos), and was known as the 'topics' (topoi). In rhetoric, a topic was a place or store to which one resorted in order to find something to say on a given subject. More specifically, a topic was a general head or line of argument which suggested material from which proofs could be made.

Aristotle distinguished two kinds of topics: the special topics and the common topics. The special topics were those classes of argument appropriate to particular kinds of discourse. There were some forms of argument that were used exclusively in law courts; some that were confined to the public forum; and others

that appeared only in ceremonial address <sup>30</sup>.

The common topics were a fairly limited stock of arguments that could be used for any occasion or type of speech <sup>31</sup>.

Arrangement - The parts of a Composition and their function.

Once the arguments and proofs are decided upon, then the writer has the problem of selecting, marshalling and organising them with a view to effecting the desired end of the discourse. The rhetorical guidelines for doing this are quite specific and detailed. The various rhetorical theorists are more or less in agreement on the internal arrangement of the discourse, and the various functions that should be fulfilled by the divisions which are put together to produce the most effective composition for the purposes of defence, exposition, or persuasion.

The divisions of a discourse are: introduction, statement of facts, proposition, proof, and conclusion. As Cicero puts it:

"They bid us open in such a way as to win the goodwill of the listener and make him receptive and attentive; and then in stating the case to make our statement plausible, lucid and brief. After that to dissect and define the matter in hand establishing our own propositions by evidence and reasonings before disproving those of the other side; some masters place next the summing up of the address and so-called peroration; while others require, before such a peroration, a digression for the sake of effect or amplification, to be followed by the summing up and the close." <sup>32</sup>

The Introduction begins the speech, paving the way for what is to follow. The author must here establish his own credentials, and convince the audience that he is qualified to speak on the subject in hand. The object of the discourse may be introduced here, and be rendered attractive or relevant to the audience to ensure they are receptive.

Aristotle says that in the introduction, the speaker should remove all obstacles, clear away prejudice, and engage the hearer's attention. He adds that the introduction can include a counter attack, praise for something important, a concise condemnation of the opponent, or a consideration of motives <sup>33</sup>.

Quintilian would add that the introduction may derive a conciliatory force from the person pleading by explaining the motive for taking the case, eg., from a sense of duty, or concern for justice. Quintilian makes the further cogent point that we have seen used to great effect in the 'Apology of Socrates' and Cicero's speech in defence of Sextus Roscius, namely that the speaker should not give the initial impression of arrogance or special ability in pleading:

"Men have a natural prejudice in favour of those struggling against difficulties, and a scrupulous judge is always specially ready to listen to an advocate whom he does not suspect to have designs on his integrity. Hence arose the tendency of ancient orators to conceal their eloquence." <sup>34</sup>

Quintilian goes on to give advice for the winning of favour and creating a good initial impression by praising, persuading or even frightening the judge. He notes that the intimation of bad consequences if the verdict should go the other way is a useful device; and lastly that in the introduction 'it will be

found advantageous to anticipate the objections that may be raised by the opponent' <sup>35</sup>.

The Narrative or Statement of facts is a section which is principally found in forensic oratory where the advocate sets out the essential 'facts' of the case, and informs the audience of any relevant circumstances.

The 'Rhetorica Ad Herennium' describes two ways of presenting the narrative section of the composition, corresponding to forensic and deliberative discourse respectively:

"It is one type when we set forth the facts and turn every detail to our advantage so as to win victory, and this kind appertains to the causes on which a decision is to be made. There is a second type which often enters into a speech as a means of winning belief or incriminating our adversary, or effecting a transition, or setting the stage for something." <sup>36</sup>

Quintilian says that the narrative section must above all be clear and credible, therefore nothing should be claimed that is contrary to nature, and reasons and motives should be explained throughout <sup>37</sup>. He also notes that it is useful in the narrative to scatter some hints of the proof that will follow, and also to emphasise the authority of the speaker.

The Proposition is a short section which sets out statements that will be 'proved' in the course of the argumentative or 'proof' section of the discourse which follows.

The 'Proof' is the central part of the composition where the

various points are made and proofs given. The proof section seeks to convince the audience of the truth of the propositions, and also refute opposing views and forestall any objections.

The *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* states:

"The entire hope of victory and the entire method of persuasion rest on proof and refutation, for when we have submitted our arguments and destroyed those of the opposition, we have, of course, completely fulfilled the speaker's function." 38

Aristotle divided proofs into what he calls 'inartistic' and 'artistic'. Both types can be used by the speaker in the proof section of the speech; 'inartistic' ones include laws, contracts and witnesses, while the 'artistic' are the arguments and material amassed during the course of 'invention' in composing the discourse.

Quintilian follows Aristotle in distinguishing the two kinds of proof; the artificial type he more generally terms the arguments of reasoning. He writes:

"Since an argument is a process of reasoning which provides proof and enables one thing to be inferred from another, and confirms facts which are uncertain by reference to facts which are certain, there must needs be something in every case which requires a proof - there must be something which either is or is believed to be true, by means of which doubtful things may be rendered credible." 39

Quintilian goes on to list various means from which arguments may be drawn, for example those of credibility, comparison and inference. These are common forms of argumentation, and ones

which Paul makes use of in his letters. Paul's arguments are frequently based on proofs drawn from the texts of scripture; we may compare Quintilian's statement that:

"Authority may be drawn from external sources to support a case .... Some include the supernatural authority." <sup>40</sup>

Quintilian also refers to the best ways of refuting the opposing arguments. He says that the usual way is to compare the arguments of the prosecution with those of the defence, concluding the superiority of those put forward by the speaker. Alternatively, it can be shown that the charges are hasty and vindictive. However, as Quintilian points out, 'the strongest argument which can be brought against a charge is that it involves peril to the community or to the judges themselves' <sup>41</sup>. Emotional and ethical appeal are important in refutation, while jests, sarcasm and irony can be effective tools here when used with discretion.

The conclusion brings the whole discourse to a close, rounding off and driving home the points that have been made, and leaving no room for objection or opposition. According to Aristotle, the conclusion of a speech is composed of four elements; to make the hearer favourable to yourself and unfavourable to the opponent; to amplify or depreciate certain points; to put the hearer in a certain emotional frame of mind; and to recapitulate what has been claimed. The speaker must assert that he has done what he promised. Aristotle writes:

"In the introduction we should state the subject in order that the question to be decided should not escape notice, but in the conclusion we should give a summary of the statement of the proofs." <sup>42</sup>

This concludes the short description of the arrangement of the parts of a speech composed along rhetorical guidelines. These divisions and their functions will later be traced in some of the letters of Paul, showing that they were consistent with the rhetorical literary conventions of the ancient world.

### Style

Style is not simply 'the dress of thought', rather it is another means of persuasion; a means of arousing appropriate emotional response in an audience, and a way of establishing the desired ethical appeal.

Aristotle begins Book III of his 'Art of Rhetoric' by saying that it is not sufficient to know what to say, but that the orator must also know how to say it. He says that the language to be used for maximum effect should be somewhat removed from the commonplace, although any appearance of artificiality must be concealed. Aristotle writes:

"Propriety of style will be obtained by the expression of emotion and character, and by proportion to the subject matter. Style is proportionate to the subject matter, when neither weighty matters are treated off hand, nor trifling matters with dignity.

Style expresses emotion - anger, admiration, pity ....

appropriate style also makes the facts appear credible." <sup>43</sup>

The classical rhetoricians generally agreed that there were three levels of style: low or plain style, middle or forcible style, and the high or florid style. Quintilian proposed that each of these styles was suited to one of the three functions of rhetoric.



The plain style was the most appropriate for instructing, the middle for moving, and the high for charming<sup>44</sup>. Epideictic oratory aims at delighting the audience by developing and using all the resources of eloquence; whereas the forensic speaker is not concerned with personal glory and his work has little scope for ornament; forensic style will therefore be more severe and restrained.

Rhetorical considerations of style involved discussion of the choice of words, and the arrangement of words. This entailed consideration of syntax and rhythmical patterns (eg. parallelism, antithesis etc.). Much attention was also given to the many 'tropes' or figures of speech - these are listed in Appendix I, for the scope of this chapter does not provide for a detailed exposition of stylistic devices and techniques.

### Memory

This is concerned with the memorising of speeches. Little attention is given to this in the rhetorical handbooks, for little can in fact be said theoretically about the process of memorising.

### Delivery

Most classical theorists acknowledge the importance of effective delivery of a persuasive discourse. Discussion of delivery involves management of the voice and the effective use of gestures. Precepts are given for voice modulation - eg. the proper pitch, volume and emphasis. Orators were also trained to use their eyes and facial expressions to aid their persuasiveness.

Before completing this chapter on classical rhetoric, I should like to make the point that rhetorical theory was undoubtedly an important and inescapable element in the education of the Graeco-Roman world. It was not confined to the public speaker, but rather its rules and guides were heeded in literature, composition, literary criticism and letter writing. In fact, rhetoric provided the fundamental training in both speaking and writing.

As this thesis is concerned with apologetic aspects of the Pauline letters, and this includes their rhetorical structure, it may be profitable to note the extent and use made of the letter form in terms of classical literary conventions.

Letter writing as a literary form was common in the Hellenistic cultural environment. Communication from one part of the empire to another for administration, trade or official business necessitated the letter. There was also the open letter which was especially useful for spreading propaganda and public information - such open letters were used for apologetic purposes, in defence of an action or person - for example, Plato's VIIth Letter. Such letters were written intentionally for public consumption, and they adhered to the rhetorical, literary conventions of the time. Alongside this development in the function of the letter form, went the use of the letter as a vehicle for philosophical exposition and moral exhortation. That certain words framed in letter form followed rhetorical literary conventions and were intended for public consumption, is aptly illustrated by Cicero when he writes:

"You see I have one way of writing what I think will be read by those only to whom I address my letter, and another way of writing what I think will be read by many." <sup>45</sup>

Chapter 1. Notes - 'The Art of Persuasion in the Ancient World'

1. Lewis Carroll - 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'  
Methuen 1978 Chapter 9 - Page 96
2. Cicero: De Oratore 1.5.17
3. For a detailed Historical survey of the Art of Rhetoric,  
see:  
E. P. J. Corbett - 'Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student'  
Oxford Univ. 1965  
  
G. Kennedy - 'The Art of Persuasion in Greece'  
Princeton, N. J. Univ. Press 1963  
  
M. L. Clarke - 'Rhetoric at Rome'. London 1953
4. E. P. J. Corbett - op. cit. Page 26
5. Plato: Phaedrus 264C
6. R. Hackworth - 'The Composition of Plato's Apology'  
Cambridge 1933
7. L. R. Shero - 'Plato's Apology and Xenophon's Apology'  
(Classical Weekly. Vol.20. 1927).
8. 'Apology' 19D
9. 'Apology' 23B
10. 'Apology' 30D
11. Plato: Letter VII. (Loeb. Vol. VII. Pages 463ff)
12. Letter VII 352
13. Cicero: De Oratore III. 35.141
14. Cicero: The Speech in defence of Sextus Roscius of Ameria  
Loeb. Vol VI. Pages 122ff.
15. In defence of Sextus Roscius I.1
16. In defence of Sextus Roscius LIII. 154
17. Cicero: De Oratore I.XXX
18. De Oratore I.XXXI. 142
19. Quintilian - 'Institutio Oratoria' 1 preface 9
20. Quintilian op.cit. Bk II. XII. 1-6
21. Aristotle - 'Rhetorica' 1.111.1ff

22. *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* - On the Theory of Public Speaking (Loeb Classical Library).  
This work was once considered to have been written by Cicero. The author of this handbook presents the Greek 'Art' in Latin dress. It is a clear and systematic presentation of rhetorical theory, though it employs many rhetorical terms and rhetorical jargon. Its usefulness lies not in any original contribution to the discussion of rhetoric, but rather in its concise presentation of the major points.
23. Quintilian *op.cit.* III.VIII.6  
n.b. Plato's VIIth letter may be classed as deliberative. It attempts to justify and defend the position taken while at the same time giving a positive exposition of the position and advises similar action in the future.
24. Quintilian *op.cit.* III.VIII.13  
(n.b. the importance of Paul's Self-Apology. See Chapter 9).
25. Aristotle *op.cit.* I.III.Iff
26. Aristotle *op.cit.* I.III.Iff
27. Aristotle *op.cit.* I.III.Iff
28. *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*. *op.cit.* I.II.3
29. Note how Paul, in 2 Corinthians, is especially anxious to reinstate himself personally so that his arguments and defence would gain a hearing.  
(See chapters 8 and 9)
30. The topics were intended to aid the speaker in discovering matter for the three modes of appeal (logos, pathos, ethos). A topic was a general head or line of argument which suggested material from which proofs could be made.
31. Aristotle *op.cit.* (Book III), named four common topics:
  1. more or less (the topic of degree)
  2. Possible and impossible
  3. Past fact and future fact
  4. Greatness and smallness (topic of size)
32. Cicero - *De Oratore* II. XLX.80
33. Aristotle - *Rhetorica* III.II.Iff
34. Quintilian *op.cit.* IV.I.19
35. Quintilian *op.cit.* IV.I.48ff
36. *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* I.VIII.12
37. Quintilian *op.cit.* IV.II.52
38. *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* I.X.18

- 39. Quintilian op.cit. V.X.11
- 40. Quintilian op.cit. V.XI.36-42
- 41. Quintilian op.cit. V.XI.21
- 42. Aristotle op.cit. 19.4
- 43. Aristotle op.cit. 7.1
- 44. Quintilian. Preface to Book VIII. 6-10
- 45. Cicero : Epistulae ad Familiares XV.XXI.4  
(Cicero to Trebonius)  
(Loeb Classical Library : Cicero - Letters to his Friends.  
Vol. III.)

Chapter 2Hellenistic - Jewish Apologetic Literature

Before Christianity, Judaism had appealed to the Graeco-Roman world, both to refute criticism and to make converts. It had used the means and methods of Hellenistic religious propaganda. The Jewish apologists stressed the antiquity of their faith, painted the great figures of their religion as heroes and demi-gods, exhibited magic and ecstatic powers in their religion, and sought to prove that Judaism and its customs were beneficial.

Over an extended period not only had Judaism been spreading progressively throughout the Hellenistic world, but the success of its propaganda and the strange character of its religious and moral customs had prompted bitter anti-Judaism. To answer the needs of the rapid expansion as well as to counter the slanderous attacks, Judaism produced a body of apologetic and propaganda literature in Greek. It developed this sophisticated apologetic to strengthen its own members and to convince Gentile readers of the rationality and attractiveness of the precepts of Jewish religion. This literature aimed at answering criticisms and refuting accusations levelled at Judaism; and positively, in the form of missionary propaganda, it put forward the Jewish cause in order to persuade and win over a Gentile audience.

An investigation into the ways the early Christian Movement learned from the Jewish Missionary propaganda, and also the way in which it distanced itself from this heritage would be

interesting, and the present study aims to contribute to such a wider perspective by looking at how Paul, in his role as an apologist for Christianity, used and adapted or changed and rejected elements in the Hellenistic/Jewish apologetic tradition.

In Hellenistic/Jewish apologetic, much depended on the attempt to expound Judaism to non-Jews in terms with which they were familiar. Philo uses contemporary philosophy and allegorical exposition to this end, and Josephus uses an historical framework in 'Antiquities' and a forensic defence style in 'Against Apion'.

It may be noted here in passing, that the Hellenistic/Jewish apologetic techniques and types of argumentation were not developed in a vacuum, but were a product of the Hellenistic culture, which of course was inextricably bound up with rhetorical theory and oratorical practice. The rhetorical traditions were an inescapable part of Graeco-Roman learning, and indeed it has been shown by David Daube that the Jewish rabbinic exposition of the Scriptures (Hillel's 'rules') had remarkable parallels and links with the rhetorical theory of the classical Greeks.<sup>1</sup> It seems to be a probable assumption that the general education of Jews and Gentiles alike would have included some basic training in rhetorical theories in speaking and writing.

The apologetic aims of Philo and Josephus are similar although they take a somewhat different form. It is with such works as theirs that 'Judaism enters upon the field of history in Greek dress and no longer as an obscure semi-barbarian cult', as O. S. Rankin<sup>2</sup> points out:



"It is difficult to recapture the atmosphere of a time with which we have lost touch, or to have sympathy with disputants whose arguments are based on premises which we no longer accept. In the sphere of religious discussion, arguments and averments often lose much of their force and influence in the course of time.

.... a religious polemic based upon an interpretation of the Bible of the kind which prevailed before the rise of the critical-historical school of interpretation in mid-nineteenth century is at once distinguished as belonging to a stage of thought which has now been overcome."

Much of the apologetic argumentation of the Jewish apologists in the Hellenistic age, was based on interpretation of biblical texts, history and famous biblical figures of the past.

There are two main apologetic elements to be found in the works of Philo and Josephus. Firstly, the (re)interpretation of history, (biblical and universal) in terms of divine providence and retribution, and the use of Old Testament figures in support of this wider view. Secondly, the more negative defence of Judaism against slanders and opposition; this necessitated both the positive exposition of the Jewish laws and customs in terms understood by Greeks, and also the denial and counter-accusation often in the form of a condemnation of Gentile morals.

### Philo as apologist

It must be stated at the outset that I am not aiming to survey in any detailed way, the concepts and beliefs incorporated in the writings of Philo; nor do I assume that Paul was directly influenced by Philo the theologian, philosopher, or apologist. Rather, I consider that the Hellenised Judaism exemplified by Philo had a lasting influence on Paul as a writer who aimed at meeting the apologetic needs of Christianity. This being the case, my intention is not to show that particular doctrines or beliefs influenced Paul, but that some of the methods used by writers such as Philo concerning the identity, expansion and survival of Judaism in the learned circles of the sophisticated Greek world were similar to those adopted later by Paul on behalf of Christianity.

Philo endeavoured to give Judaism a rational and metaphysical standing in a world which was becoming increasingly sophisticated in the natural sciences and philosophical systems. In a culture which was in the process of rejecting the old myths, Philo wrote to convince the 'intelligentsia' that Judaism and the Jewish scriptures were not merely such myths, but were highly sophisticated rules for living and for understanding the world when they were correctly interpreted. He made out an apologetic for Judaism which aimed at presenting the rational basis on which, for example, the Torah was developed. He 'apologised' for the Patriarchal stories by making them an integral part of the legislation - the 'types' or 'examples' from which the laws were born, and from which important lessons were to be learned.

Philo 'translated' the Jewish faith and customs into the language of his Greek environment. He wrote for Jews so that they would not forget their heritage under cultural and rationalistic pressures to do so. He also addressed himself to Gentiles in such a way as to captivate their interest. He does not overtly enjoin Gentiles to embrace the Jewish faith, but he subtly builds up the attractions offered by Judaism, meeting possible objections on the way by involved allegorical interpretation, or sometimes historically based explanations. The crowning subtlety comes in the treatise 'on Rewards and Punishments' where Philo describes how those who follow the Torah faithfully are blessed, and those who do not are cursed. The powerful descriptions of the punishments entailed are vivid and in places horrifying, whereas the promised blessings are more restrained, natural and not exaggerated into absurdity by promises that could not be fulfilled, or blessings that could only be conceivable in the imagination.

Philo did not intend to be the champion of a new philosophy, but rather to present an 'apologia' for the teaching of Moses, by showing convincingly that it was full of the highest philosophical truth. He considered himself to be a devout Jew, and earnestly defended the religion of Moses against both idolatrous superstition and atheistic philosophy, and also the free-thinking tendencies among his own people. Against the former he writes:

"Let no one, then, who has a soul worship a soulless thing, for it is utterly preposterous that the works of nature should turn aside to do service to what human hands have wrought." 3

And to the latter he writes:

"I have now described without any reservation the curses and penalties which they will deservedly suffer who disregard the holy laws of justice and piety, who have been seduced by the polytheistic creeds which finally lead to atheism, and have forgotten the teaching of their race and of their fathers in which they were trained from their earliest years to acknowledge the One in substance, the supreme God, to whom alone all must belong who follow truth unfeigned instead of mythical figments." <sup>4</sup>

Clearly, we see that Philo met with unbelief and doubt within Judaism as well as from outside. The same is found concerning Paul's work, for he had to meet mistaken interpretation and false teaching within early Christianity as well as scorn and objection from without. This double challenge may well be taken to be an inherent part of the task of an apologist, cope with disagreement within and without.

Philo's work was part of a body of Jewish propaganda literature which circulated in the Greek world of the first century. A similar spirit of compromise and persuasion pervaded the apologetic works of these writers, and it is important to attempt to relate Philo to his contemporary literary world in order to understand better this apologetic intent which we find in his work, for the idea that within Hellenised Judaism Philo stood more or less alone is an optical illusion caused by the accidental fact that few other comparable products of Hellenistic Judaism, apart from Josephus, have come down to us. Henry Chadwick, writing about the relationship between Philo and Paul, says, 'the hypothesis

of direct or even indirect dependence is unlikely. Both writers draw on a common stock of hellenistic Jewish tradition. The principal interest lies in the different ways in which they made use of it'.<sup>5</sup> One must then begin by delineating as far as possible Philo's position in relation to this 'common stock of hellenistic Jewish tradition'. The question of Philo's individuality, and his use of sources and traditions, has been a controversial one. The problem really arises from the widely recognised fact that Philo's writing is full of inconsistencies. The questions this raises are whether he could be merely confused, or use sources carelessly. R. G. Hamerton-Kelly<sup>6</sup> has argued that Philo has been read in the way the Bible was read in pre-critical times, pointing out that 'there is hardly any exposition more difficult to make or follow in modern scholarship than in Philo's 'thought'. One is left exhausted and bewildered by the intricacies, inconsistencies and flaws in his argument'. Hamerton-Kelly maintains that in fact Philo could be seen to be 'consistent within one treatise, and that we overlook this because we are unaware of the grouping of the various works'.<sup>7</sup>

Whether this can be proved or not, certainly there has been no universal agreement concerning Philo's position within contemporary literary circles, or his personal creativity. The question has been variously discussed whether Philo was a mere compiler of sources and synagogue traditions, or the creator of a new religious system.

On one extreme in this issue is W. L. Knox<sup>8</sup> who refers to Philo's works as 'that vast and ill ordered library which goes under the name of Philo of Alexandria'. According to Knox Philo

is an almost faceless compiler, whose all too voluminous works are no more than a vast ragbag of material incorporated from any sources that happened to be at hand - 'He is simply a compiler of traditional midrashic material of the schools and synagogues of Alexandria' <sup>9</sup>. Knox says that an indication of this is the fact that the identification of wisdom with Logos in Philo's work makes the preservation of the term 'wisdom' unnecessary, yet it is preserved. This inconsistency may be taken to show that 'Philo is simply incorporating a whole mass of traditional exegesis of the Bible, and the tradition is too tenacious for him' <sup>10</sup>. Knox, therefore, understands the Philonic corpus merely as a compilation of traditional material as was used in the Hellenistic synagogue for purposes of exegesis, lecturing and preaching.

The view of H. A. Wolfson is opposite to that of Knox on this question of Philo's originality. To Wolfson, Philo is a philosopher of genius with strong, controlling ideas, by means of which he welded diverse sources and traditions into an original and consistent philosophy. Wolfson maintains that Philo utilises sources from both the Jewish and the Hellenistic realms of discourse, but his style of thought is predominantly that of the synagogue preacher and commentator on scripture.

His philosophy is an authentic expression of Judaism, closely related to the Palestinian traditions, so that one can describe his work as the 'foundations of religious philosophy in Judaism'. <sup>11</sup>

Most commentators, however, hold an intermediate position on the

nature of Philo's authorship. While recognising that he uses sources and traditional material, they nevertheless treat him as an author in his own right and not merely as a compiler or editor. Goodenough's <sup>12</sup> famous and controversial thesis that Philo presents the tradition of a Jewish mystery cult belongs here, for Goodenough would argue that Philo uses source material, but that he uses it in a creative way.

Henry Chadwick <sup>13</sup> takes a mediating view on this issue of Philo's individual standing. He argues that 'it seems reasonable to see in Philo a man who incorporated much earlier material, even if there is no sufficient ground for concluding that he was more than an expert with scissors and paste. He had an individuality of his own, but also stood in an established tradition of Hellenised Judaism'.

Philo's motives for writing the various treatises and the different audiences envisaged by them, tells us much about Philo's individual contribution to the Hellenistic/Jewish literature of his time. He was a scholar within Diaspora Judaism as his 'Allegorical' commentary shows, and he was also an ardent apologist for the Jewish religion and way of life. He wished to present it attractively to his Greek cultural environment and to defend the Jewish community against misinformed prejudice and attack.

Throughout his 'Exposition of the Law', <sup>14</sup> Philo builds up the attractiveness of the Jewish way of life, of the Patriarchs and Moses as supreme examples of the embodiment of virtues; he employs Stoic and Platonic turns of phrase and concepts so as to leave the reader thinking that these philosophical systems

are only parts of the great Jewish one. This is also a method of 'translating' the Jewish faith into Greek terms - the beliefs and admonitions are brought home by the use of the best or most appropriate parts of the familiar philosophical systems. The appeal is penetrating and vivid whilst at the same time adhering quite faithfully to the biblical accounts which are portrayed as historical events as well as allegorical typologies - in fact it is significant that the more complicated allegorical analysis is more apparent in the 'Allegorical commentary' which is aimed at Jewish readers, while the 'Exposition of the Law' is more of an introduction to Judaism meant for non-Jewish readers.

The overall effect of the 'Exposition of the Law' is one of genuine feeling for Judaism, and not only on the part of the author, for the feeling is effectively transferred to the reader, for example, other nations are said to have an interest in the Jewish law on the ground that it is in harmony with nature. The nationalistic fervour so familiar in apocalyptic and other inter-Testamental literature is lacking, the appeal is to the intellect and to the interest of the readers, and the universal priesthood of Judaism is emphasised:

"Among other nations the priests are accustomed to offer prayers and sacrifices for their kinsmen and friends and fellow countrymen only, but the high priest of the Jews makes prayers and gives thanks on behalf of the whole human race ...". 15

It may be noted at this point that one should be careful not to distinguish 'Palestinian' and 'Hellenistic' Judaism as if there



was a complete cleavage between them. There was of course a vast gulf between the most and the least hellenised elements in Judaism, but, as S. Belkin <sup>16</sup> has shown in 'Philo and the Oral Law', there are similarities between the two which cannot be discounted. The fact that the two can be found mixed even at the Palestinian rabbinic level is shown by D. Daube's <sup>17</sup> convincing argument that Hellenistic rhetorical theory may lie behind, or at least have influenced, the Rabbinic methods of exegesis as stated by Hillel. It may be significant to note that traditionally Hillel was portrayed as the patient Rabbi when it came to the instructing and conversion of Gentiles.

Jewish 'proselyting', as W. G. Braude <sup>18</sup> calls it, was an accepted part of Judaism in Philo's time. Braude gives several examples of stories from rabbinic tradition involving the treatment and encouragement of proselytes. These include a cycle of stories enlarging on the picture of the impatient Shammai and the saintly Hillel. The narrator of these tales must have known that his readers were sympathetic to missionary activity for he reckoned that they would think less of Shammai because of his anger and arrogance regarding the instruction of proselytes. Braude also points to a series of provisions midway between legal prescriptions and moral exhortations intended to protect the person and status of the proselyte within the Jewish community.

Philo is also conscious of the position of the proselyte within Judaism, and in the treatise 'On the Virtues', he points out that in the 'humanity' of the Mosaic legislation there is provision made to protect the newcomer, and a call to the

Jews to accept them and treat them as equals:

"Having laid down laws from members of the same nation, he holds that the incomers too should be accorded every favour and consideration as their due, because abandoning their kinsfolk by blood, their country, their customs and temples and images of their gods, and the tributes paid to them, they have taken the journey to a better home, from idle fables to a clear vision of the truth and the worship of the truly existing God. He commands all members of the nation to love the incomers, not only as friends and kinsfolk but as themselves in body and soul..."<sup>19</sup>

In his work as an apologist, Philo commends Judaism to the Greeks; he expounds its teaching for them, he explains the Torah and many of its more specific implications for everyday life, he translates the Jewish beliefs into their type of language and concepts of the world, he defends Judaism against objections and scorn, and he gives reasoned arguments and explanations for many of its doctrines and practices.

The difficulty encountered in placing Philo in relation to the literary culture of his time is enhanced by the tantalisingly scant details that we have of Philo's life and work. He lived at a time contemporary with the initial Christian movement in Palestine (c 25BC - c 45/50AD). He came from a wealthy Jewish family of Alexandria which had connections in official and public life in the city. Philo himself headed the embassy to the Emperor Gaius; but even in his description of these events he tells us little of himself. Similarly, the rest of his work has few biographical details. At the beginning of Book III,

'on the Special Laws Books' we read:

"There was a time when I had leisure for philosophy and for the contemplation of the universe and its contents .... my steps were dogged by the deadliest of mischiefs, the hater of the good, envy, which suddenly set me up and ceased not to pull me down with violence until it plunged me in the ocean of civil cares, in which I am swept away, unable even to raise my head above water ..... " <sup>20</sup>.

If it were possible to write an informed and detailed biography of Philo, this would make the task of understanding his position within Judaism and in relation to contemporary Hellenistic/Jewish literature, and easier one. This in turn would help considerably in delineating and identifying how much of Philo's work relies on written sources or oral traditions.

The question of the historical situation out of which Philo's sources might have come was the subject of W. Bousset's work <sup>21</sup> on the Alexandrian scholastic activities. Bousset argued that Philo took over traditional material from the Jewish schools of Alexandria and incorporated it into his work. Bousset questioned the assumption that a 'source' had to be a written document; rather his view was that sources were relatively stable congeries of ideas, which in written or oral form could have been the stock-in-trade of a school. He maintains that the writings of Philo can only be understood on the assumption that they contain oral or written sources from such school traditions.

I. Heinemann <sup>22</sup> studied Philo's 'Exposition of the Law',

identifying a number of sources. His overall conclusion was that Philo's Jewish knowledge is as much as might have been gained from ordinary participation in a Jewish community.

According to Heinemann, Philo knew nothing of the oral tradition on which the Talmudic law was based, and he knew no Hebrew. He simply had the Jewish practices of his own community in Alexandria, and the Pentateuch in Greek, and he interpreted this material throughout in terms of Greek science.

On the other hand, the work of S. Belkin <sup>23</sup> presents an entirely different picture of Philo's relation to oral traditions. In 'De Specialibus Legibus', says Belkin, one sees Philo not only as an allegorical commentator but also as a competent jurist who was deeply interested in expounding and explaining the Mosaic law, and this he does admirably. Belkin further shows that Philo's interpretation of the law in the main agreed with Pharisaic principles. Goodenough <sup>24</sup> had said that Philo must have derived his knowledge of the law in Egypt because his interpretation often differs from the Tannaitic and Greek laws. Belkin says that the conclusion is right, but that the reason is that most of Philo's laws do agree with the principles of Tannaitic Halakah, for how else would Philo have become acquainted with Palestinian law - it is likely that in the main the Egyptian/Jewish courts followed the Palestinian examples.

Belkin goes on to show how Philo followed closely the Pharisaic tradition concerning the laws of slavery and others, and he also shows that there are passages in Philo which reflect Greek and Roman law <sup>25</sup>, and there are also some Biblical laws which Philo

explains in Greek/Roman terminology <sup>26</sup>. Belkin points out that on the whole Philo the Alexandrian seems to have known more about Palestinian law than Josephus the Judaeen.

Goodenough's 'By Light, Light' <sup>27</sup> takes the allegorical writings as the chief guide to Philo's thought. He holds the premise that Philo's initial and main departure from Judaism was in fact that he took to heart the pagan idea of salvation, the escape of the soul from the body, and that this lead him to postulate Judaism as the supreme 'Mystery'. An obvious objection to this theory is that if Goodenough is right in saying that throughout the Allegory the main theme is the presentation of the Mystery, then why, when recommending Judaism to a Greek audience, did Philo not present it as the greatest of all the Mysteries, as this would be an appealing way of presenting Judaism to a Hellenistic cultural environment. Philo does not do this, and in fact he takes pains to show that Judaism is a practical way of living when he expounds the laws and their implications. In the treatise on blessings and punishments, the emphasis is certainly on the legalistic side of Judaism and not the mystical.

It is not my intention to survey the concepts, beliefs and allegorical interpretations found in the work of Philo, rather it is to look at Philo in his role as a Jewish apologist.

Goodenough sums up the total content of Philo's extant works thus, 'some of Philo's works are political propaganda for the governing class, some are verse by verse commentary with literal meaning and simple moral conclusions, some are subtle

presentations of Jewish history and law for sympathetic Gentiles' <sup>28</sup>. What Goodenough does not note is that all of Philo's works can be seen to have some apologetic overtones and intentions, and that this apologetic is worked out to suit the different audiences to whom Philo addresses his treatises. In the following survey of Philo's writings it is to these apologetic methods and themes that I hope to point.

The 'Allegorical Commentary' considers the biblical text verse by verse, and in places devotes whole treatises to discursive allegory on only a few verses. Philo does show a profound loyalty to the sanctity of the scripture, and at the same time an 'obsession' as Goodenough calls it, with the ideas of the Greek civilisation around him. However, he did show discrimination in his adoption of ideas and practices of Hellenistic culture - eg. he scorns idolatry and pagan cultus and image worship. It is fair to say that Philo remained fundamentally true to Judaism, and set a limit to the extent to which it was possible to adopt Hellenistic concepts and ideas; this is probably another aspect of the translating of a Semitic faith into Greek terms - the ability to use what is helpful from the alien culture without endangering the essential tenets of the cause expounded. For example, although Philo accepted the abstract pure being of the Greek philosophical systems, he never allows himself to forget or lose sight of the personal and merciful God of the Old Testament:

"(That) God marvelling at Abraham's faith in Him repaid him with faithfulness by confirming with an oath the gifts which he had promised, and here He no longer was

with him as God with man but as a friend." <sup>29</sup>

The 'Allegorical Commentary' is the part of Philo's work which holds most of his more speculative thought and contains his construction of the 'elaborate machinery' through which God could be connected with the world, though ontologically distinct from it. The most important single formulation of the mediation is in terms of the logos and the powers of God, which represent God in his dealing with the world.

This eclectic philosophical system of Philo's is well known and a description of it here will not prove helpful in the consideration of Philo's apologetic methods and intentions. However, a strongly apologetic note is struck both at the beginning and end of the 'Allegorical Commentary'. The treatise 'On Creation' begins with an apology by Philo for the methods of Moses; he explains why Moses' account of the Law is prefaced with historical narrative, and he compares it with others to show its superiority:

"While among other lawgivers some have nakedly and without embellishment drawn up a code of the things held to be right among their people, and others, dressing up their ideas in much irrelevant and cumbersome matter, have befogged the masses and hidden the truth under their fictions, Moses, disdaining either course, the one as devoid of the philosopher's painstaking effort to explore his subject thoroughly, the other as full of falsehood and imposture, introduced his laws with an admirable and most impressive exordium. He refrained, on the one hand, from stating abruptly what should be practised or

avoided, and on the other hand, in the face of the necessity of preparing the minds of those who were to live under the laws for their reception, he refrained from inventing myths himself or acquiescing in those composed by others. His exordium is one that excites our admiration in the highest degree. It recounts the creation of the world, implying that the world is in harmony with the law, and the law with the world, and that the man who observes the law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world ..." <sup>30</sup>.

The conclusion to the Treatise 'On Creation' is a fine example of the way Philo can make the mistaken believers as he understands them, look stupid. He scorns their beliefs with an arrogance that comes only from absolute confidence in his own faith. Among the opinions assailed are doubts about the existence of God, polytheism, and doubts about the existence of providence in the world.

When Philo writes about education, one can detect the influence of Jewish 'wisdom schools' and wisdom teaching. It may be that the wisdom 'schools' had a notable influence in the education of Jews by Philo's time, the international flavour and universalism of the wisdom teaching appealing especially to the Jews of the Diaspora. It was quite natural that wisdom teaching should have an influence on the Jewish propaganda literature that was designed to 'appeal' to a Hellenistic audience, and also in presenting a defence of Jewish learning in the face of Greek rationalism and speculation. It was the obvious stepping stone between Judaism and Hellenistic culture for the biblical



wisdom literature was in effect the philosophy of the Jews. Jean Laporte in the article, 'Philo in the tradition of biblical Wisdom Literature' <sup>31</sup> aims to identify in Philo, ideas and images which belong to the wisdom traditions of the Old Testament. His conclusion is that in Philo there are many of the motives, images, and themes of the biblical books of Wisdom. Furthermore, Philo alters whatever he appropriates and mixes it with Greek concepts and images, so that 'we must recognise that he inherits a tradition about wisdom, but he also goes beyond the biblical Wisdom books' <sup>32</sup>; for example, in his use of methods such as symbolism and allegory which are used more reservedly in the wisdom books.

Much of what Philo says on the subject of the content and aims of general education seems to conform to contemporary discussions of the subject by Greek and Roman authors. For Philo the general education should, theoretically, succeed in training for home life and should equip the student for going on to higher studies, whether in philosophy or, as is more often the case, one of the professions - eg. law, architecture, medicine or rhetoric.

Philo sees the encyclical curriculum as preliminary to the studying of philosophy, the school subjects are preparation for higher education by giving the student certain skills such as reading and writing, and by training them in the ways of thinking and understanding. They are also part of the more general process of education which aims at the formation of character. As Thomas Conley notes <sup>33</sup>, Philo says the encyclia are not just

fields of facts and areas of technical competence, they also 'awaken sleeping souls' (Cong.81ff), and 'exercise, drill and improve' those who learn them, preparing them for a life of virtue and piety.

It is interesting that there is a marked dislike for sophistry and the sophists throughout Philo's work. He saw the Sophists who practised rhetoric as an end in itself and not using it merely to establish truth, as debasing philosophical endeavour. Philo writes:

"It is well to listen to the voice of virtue, above all when she sets before us such a doctrine as this ... wisdom has no kinship with the sophist's culture. For the latter has for the fruits of all its labour only those persuasions which tend to establish the false opinion, which destroys the soul; but wisdom studies truth and thus obtains that great source of profit to the mind, knowledge of right reason." <sup>34</sup>

Elsewhere Philo states:

"And the wisdom must not be that of the systems hatched by the word-catchers and sophists who sell their tenets and arguments like other merchants in the market, men who forever pit philosophy against philosophy without a blush .... " <sup>35</sup>.

Underlying Philo's convictions concerning sophistry and wisdom is his belief in the value of education as a stepping stone to higher things. He accepts the Encyclia of his time which consisted of literature, rhetoric, mathematics, music and logic. It is

the way to find philosophy which, in turn, finds knowledge. However, if the initial education is persisted in too long or misused, particularly the rhetorical part, it breeds sophistry. This is the subject of the extended allegory of the story of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah in 'On the Preliminary Studies'; and there Philo writes:

"Now we must understnad that great themes need great introductions; and the greatest of all themes is virtue, for it deals with the greatest of materials, that is the whole life of man. Naturally then virtue will employ no minor kind of introduction, but grammar, geometry, astronomy, rhetoric, music, and all other branches of intellectual study." <sup>36</sup>

Philo then goes on to describe each of these educational subjects in turn.

He says little about rhetoric, but enough to show that his view of it is consistent with his view of the role of education generally and with the justification for school subjects as a whole. Something close to the classic enumeration of the parts of rhetorical art is found in the treatise 'On Dreams' <sup>37</sup>, and of the art of rhetoric Philo writes:

"Rhetoric, sharpening the mind to the observation of facts, and training and welding thought to expression, will make the man a true master of words and thoughts, thus taking into its charge the peculiar and special gift which nature has not bestowed on any other living creature." <sup>38</sup>

It is worth noting that in this passage there are several

technical terms used of the rhetorical theory which formed a part of Greek education. For Philo, as for Cicero rhetoric is a kind of perfect synthesis of wisdom and eloquence. Philo contrasts the skill of the 'rhetor', that of 'graceful expression', with the empty speechifying of the sophists.

There may be a link between traditional Jewish wisdom teaching and the Greek (rhetorical) learning in the education of Hellenistic Jews. Such a link cannot be proved but relies on the probable assumption that education in the Jewish communities of the Hellenistic world used Jewish wisdom teaching for instruction in Jewish 'philosophy' together with the general Greek encyclopaedia which included rhetorical training.

Thomas Conley <sup>39</sup> argues that the education received by Hellenistic Jews had to serve two purposes: to equip them for studying and understanding their Jewish heritage (Biblical history, laws, customs, scriptures), and also to fill the 'concrete need for Jews in the Diaspora to acquire the 'heathen learning', partly for the sake of 'getting along' and partly in the interest of strengthening the apologetic of Judaism'.

It would seem to be a likely conclusion, and one supported by Philo's writing on the subject of education and rhetoric, that education in the Greek world for Jews as well as for Greeks, included some instruction in the rhetorical theory of the Greek culture as well as schooling in Jewish traditions.

Philo's Apologetic - the 'Exposition' of Judaism

While some passages in Philo's 'Allegorical Commentary' can be construed as having apologetic intention, there are other works of Philo's which are more obviously intended to have defensive and explanatory appeal. The works are by no means uniform in character, or in their intended destinations. There are the explicitly political ones <sup>40</sup> which seek to ensure a more tolerant attitude from the Roman authorities towards the Jews by subtle argument. There are those works which answer criticisms levelled at Judaism, <sup>41</sup> and there is the 'Exposition of the Law' <sup>42</sup> which intends to introduce the Jewish faith and way of life to the intelligent and inquiring Gentile reader, and aims to dispel any misconceptions that the latter may hold. It is probable that this was intended for a Gentile audience, although this is not beyond dispute and is by no means generally accepted.

In the 'Exposition of the Law' Philo leads the Gentile into Judaism by explaining the fundamentals of the Mosaic code and the story of the way in which it came to be established. The Torah is treated in divisions, the cosmological introduction, the general principles of the law, the application of these principles to specific laws, the relation of these to the cardinal virtues of the Greeks, and the sanctions of the law with regard to reward and punishment.

Philo's 'The Life of Moses' introduces the ideals of Judaism through the story of Moses and the law. Some scholars have assumed that the 'Life of Moses' is a treatise independent of the

'Exposition of the Law'; this may be so, but there is sufficient connection between the two to enable Philo to assume that the reader of the 'Exposition of the Law' would also read the 'Life of Moses'.

The 'Life of Moses' is missionary propaganda designed for Gentiles, and there is also good reason to consider the 'Exposition of the Law' in the same light. Goodenough<sup>43</sup> gives five reasons why the 'Exposition of the Law' should be seen as addressing a non-Jewish audience, and certainly the overall impression of the work is that it was meant to be read by a much less educated reader, less educated, that is, in the Jewish faith and way of life.

Goodenough lays much emphasis on the political motives or beliefs of Philo. He points out that in the 'Exposition of the Law' Joseph the politician is an admirable ruler, whereas in the 'Allegorical Commentary' he is depicted as a despicable character. This difference has long been noted and some scholars have explained it by attributing Philo's changes in this presentation to persecutions of the Jews at various times, but such chronological reconciliations are not convincing. Goodenough suggests that such discrepancies on Philo's part are not due to a chronic vacillation in his character, but are allied to the different readers he has in mind when he is writing. This means that if the hypothesis that Philo wrote the 'Exposition of the Law' with a Gentile audience in mind, then this would also be the answer to the old problem concerning the two divergent caricatures of Joseph. The portrait of Joseph in 'De Somniis' in the 'Allegorical Commentary'

may be seen as a veiled expression of Jewish hatred of foreign domination by Rome; and the favourable picture of Joseph given to the Gentile reader will show how well a Jew governed Egypt by comparison with the Romans.

The second point that Goodenough makes is that the treatise on 'The Special Laws' which conveys the essential harmony between the Jewish law and the jurisprudence of Egypt, would be meaningless if designed for Jews. They would already be familiar with the laws governing everyday life and they would not need to be convinced that these laws were acceptable in pagan Egypt. On the other hand, such an argument would be very meaningful and powerful if it were meant for Gentiles who were interested in the Jewish religion, but accepted and respected the Roman legal administration.

The attitude towards proselytes in the 'Exposition of the Law' is significant. I have previously pointed out the liberal attitude towards proselytes and prospective proselytes in the 'Exposition of the Law'. In contrast the 'Allegorical Commentary' does not mention proselytes at all. Again a pointer to the 'Exposition of the Law' being addressed to non-Jews and the 'Allegorical Commentary' as being concerned to interest Jewish readers.

Another important observation is that throughout the 'Allegorical Commentary' Philo assumes that his readers are so familiar with the scripture that he need only make allusion to them, while the 'Exposition of the Law' mentions nothing about the scriptures of Judaism without lengthy explanation. The stories of the Pentateuch are told with freedom and detail, apparently assuming

that the reader has never heard them before.

If the foregoing hypothesis is accepted, then the 'Exposition of the Law' and 'The Life of Moses' together form a body of evidence for the character of Jewish missionary propaganda, and also add much weight to the view that Philo was a notable Jewish apologist.

In the 'Exposition of the Law' Philo starts with the assumption that the Pentateuch as a whole is a law book written by Moses. The theory is developed that Moses began logically by describing the foundation of the commonwealth which was to be governed by the following laws which the Patriarchs observed even though they were not yet written down - the Patriarchs are portrayed as themselves 'living laws'.

When Philo tells the story of Abraham he suggests the existence of a natural law:

"They (the patriarchs) listened to no voice or instruction but their own: they gladly accepted conformity with nature, holding that nature itself was, as indeed it is, the most venerable of statutes, and thus their whole life was one of happy obedience to the law." <sup>44</sup>

In support of the thesis that the 'Exposition of the Law' was written for Gentiles is the point that Philo can write in a way which almost amounts to an exercise in comparative religion. For example, in his treatise 'On Abraham' <sup>45</sup> he uses examples from 'barbarian' religions to show that Abraham's (near) sacrifice of Isaac was not unprecedented or unparalleled in other



religions and cultures, but he goes on to show forcefully that it was the motives of Abraham which were different and far more praiseworthy:

"We must examine whether Abraham, when he intended to sacrifice his son, was mastered by any of these motives, custom, or love of honour, or fear." <sup>46</sup>

Philo goes on to dispel these reasons and explains that it was his pure trust and belief which led him to show complete obedience in this:

"Thus everyone who is not malignant or a lover of evil must be overwhelmed with admiration for his extraordinary piety." <sup>47</sup>

It may well be that the early apologists were the first to seriously study and compare the various religious beliefs around them <sup>48</sup>. There would be no point at all in these lengthy pagan examples and parallels if the work was written with Jews in mind, for Jews already considered themselves, their history, and their religion as superior. This must, therefore, have been a persuasive way of showing Gentiles that the Jewish faith was superior.

The remarkable difference in the presentation of Joseph in the 'Allegorical Commentary' and in the 'Exposition of the Law' has already been mentioned. It may, however, be useful to look at the teaching or motives underlying the original story of Joseph in the Pentateuch. G. Von Rad <sup>49</sup> gives a convincing theory that the account of Joseph was a historical, wisdom 'novel' with the didactic purpose of presenting Joseph as an example of a truly wise man. This may prove significant when considering

the influence of wisdom on the writing of apologetic, for in a work intended to commend Judaism and Jewish philosophy to a wider audience, the same methods are used by Philo as by the Old Testament wisdom propounders - that is, the use of stories with didactic and appealing overtones. Significantly, Philo speaks through Joseph an explicitly apologetic speech on behalf of the 'Hebrews':

"We children of the Hebrews follow laws and customs which are especially our own. Other nations are permitted after the fourteenth year to deal without interference with harlots and all those who make a traffic of their bodies, but with us a courtesan is not even permitted to live, and death is the penalty for women who ply this trade. Before lawful union we allow no mating with other women, but come as virgin men to virgin maidens ....." 50.

'The Life of Moses' is arranged under four headings, king, lawgiver, priest and prophet, and is designed to depict Moses as one who possessed all the qualities of the perfect, idealised, virtuous man dreamed of by the pagan world and culture.

Philo begins his portrayal of Moses by giving his reasons for the composition:

"I hope to bring the story of this greatest and most perfect of men to the knowledge of such as deserve not to remain in ignorance of it; for, while the fame of the laws which he left behind him has travelled throughout the civilised world and reached the ends of the earth, the man himself as he really was is known to few.

Greek men of letters have refused to treat him as worthy of memory, possibly through envy, and also because in many cases the ordinances of the legislators of the different states are opposed to his.

.... but I will disregard the malice and tell the story of Moses as I have learned it, both from the sacred books, the wonderful monuments of his own wisdom which he has left behind him, and from some of the elders of the nation." 51

Moses is presented as the personalised ideal of virtue, his rise to power is indirectly compared to the conquering of nations by such as the Roman armies and their Generals. This comparison is certainly not explicit, but if I quote at some length from the first part of the treatise, Philo's methods of praise by comparison will be seen to be obvious, and the subtlety recognised:

"The appointed leader of all these was Moses, invested with this office and kingship, not like some of those who thrust themselves into positions of power by means of arms and engines of war and strength of infantry, cavalry, and navy, but on account of his nobility of conduct and the universal benevolence that he never failed to show.

.... Having received office he did not, like some, take pains to exalt his own house, and promote his sons.

..... He held that to prize material wealth shows poverty of soul, and despised such wealth as blind." 52

Having thus praised the character and career of Moses, Philo goes on to speak of the basic tenets that the Mosaic code lays down - eg. the belief in one God and the rest of the Decalogue. In the following books on the special laws, that is, the more explicit

rules of everyday life, Philo shows a consistent concern for the reconciling of Gentiles by reasoned argument into believing the Jewish way to be the best way. Philo does not simply shower scorn and abuse on pagan beliefs, but rather by persuasive argument attempts to show the error in pagan worship by claiming that the Jewish God is above theirs:

"But He is the God not only of men but also of gods,  
and the ruler not only of commoners but of rulers ...". 53

Although Philo may at first give the impression that he is a 'liberal' so far as pagan religion goes, in that he is not above using its content to his own purpose of showing how the Jewish religion is better, in fact he leaves the Gentile in absolutely no doubt that the pagan cultus will not be tolerated.

#### The Political works

The two treatises 'Against Flaccus' and the 'Embassy to Gaius' are set in a different climate from Philo's other writings. They are extraordinarily clever political tracts designed to prove to the Roman administrators that they harass the Jews at their own peril. The Jews are presented as the best citizens in the Empire and are said to be divinely protected in their religious and legal observances, so that to compel them to disregard these and make them recognise the Imperial claim to divinity would be fatal to those who attempt it.

The apologetic technique employed by Philo to achieve this form of propaganda on behalf of the Jews, is the (re)interpretation of historical events, narrated in a biased way to prove the point.

The first target for this attention was the Roman prefect, Flaccus, who not only failed to protect the Jews, but, according to Philo, actually encouraged<sup>u</sup> the rioters. The larger issue was that the Jews refused homage to the Emperor's statue, and an appeal was made to Gaius himself. This appeal Philo had led in the trip to Rome, and the 'Embassy to Gaius' tells the story of the venture.

It is very plain that in these treatises Philo was not concerned to write an impartial narrative of events, but in fact they must be construed as political propaganda, with the apologetic aim of winning respect and toleration for the Jews. Goodenough puts forward the attractive theory that 'Against Flaccus' was in fact written as a warning for the new prefect to bear in mind<sup>54</sup>.

The treatise 'Against Flaccus' is, however, ostensibly called for because of a crisis which threatened Jews in Alexandria in particular, as well as other parts of the Empire. Alexandrian mobs had demonstrated against the Jewish king, Agrippa, during his stay in Alexandria. Fearing afterwards that Agrippa would protest to the Emperor Gaius that the Alexandrians had thereby affronted the authority which Gaius had placed in him, and that reprisals would be taken against the Alexandrians, certain Egyptian leaders conceived of a plan to prove Alexandria's loyalty to Gaius. They proposed with Flaccus' approval, that images of the Emperor be set up in all meeting houses<sup>55</sup>. This setting up of images amounted to desecration in Jewish synagogues, and when the Jews resisted Flaccus declared the Jews alien in

Alexandria and permitted anti-Semitic mobs to riot and murder Jews <sup>56</sup>. The treatise 'Against Flaccus' begins with a sort of praise for this Governor. I say 'sort of praise' for even here is an undertone of the harsh words to come:

"I praise Flaccus not because I thought it right to laud an enemy but to show his villainy in a clearer light.

For to one who sins through ignorance of a better course pardon may be given, but a wrongdoer who has knowledge has no defence but stands already convicted at the bar of his conscience." <sup>57</sup>

Philo's account of the historical narrative which led up to the desecrating of the synagogues and the persecution of the Jews in Alexandria moves smoothly and interestingly. Eventually any respect for Flaccus is lost completely and the description of his fate is more than vivid, it is really distasteful as Philo gloats over his fall and death with vindictiveness.

Unlike other governors, who at times were convicted of mishandling their public offices only after the expiration of their appointments and after a fair trial before the Emperor, Flaccus was apprehended ahead of such time. Former friends of his had brought some accusation against him before Gaius <sup>58</sup>, and the Emperor sent a centurion to arrest the Governor. Philo parallels many of Flaccus' sufferings with those of his Jewish victims. Convicted and condemned to exile, Flaccus laments that because he expropriated the Jews, denied them their rights of citizenship, humiliated them before their enemies he also lost his property and citizenship, and was paraded as a spectacle through many cities <sup>59</sup>,

and then finally the sentence of exile was changed to that of death.

'The Embassy to Gaius' was also written against a political figure, the Emperor Gaius, who had set himself against the Jews by refusing to restore their political rights in Alexandria <sup>60</sup>, demanding to be worshipped by them <sup>61</sup>. As in the case of Flaccus, this work undoubtedly told how Gaius met his violent end by assassination <sup>62</sup>. Unfortunately, the end of this treatise has been lost, but in the extant part we find the same biased interpretation of history for apologetic reasons as was seen in 'On Flaccus'.

Philo begins by stating that the political events of the recent past are enough to prove that God cares for those who worship him and call upon him <sup>63</sup>. He notes that not long after Gaius's self-deification and the subsequent persecution of the Jews because they refused to worship him, evil was brought upon the whole Empire as wars broke out <sup>64</sup>. The refusal of the Emperor Augustus to demand such veneration from the Jews saved the Empire from the chaos which Gaius's conceit brought to it <sup>65</sup>.

Before concluding this chapter on Philo the apologist, I must mention those of Philo's writings which are the most explicitly apologetic. Unfortunately the 'Hypothetica' is lost to us, except for two fragments preserved by Eusebius. The treatise 'On the Contemplative Life' is generally thought to be part of this larger work, an 'Apology for the Jews' addressed to Gentiles which is not extant.

Philo's apologetic work has been seen to cover the exposition of Judaism to a Gentile audience, in reasoned and attractive

terms. We have also seen how, in the political works, Philo defends the Jews with the best line of defense -- that of attack, by reinterpreting history to show how persecutors of Jews experienced untimely deaths.

In the fragments of the 'Hypothetica' we see Philo presenting what may well have been the standard apologetic arguments of the Jews; while 'On the Contemplative Life' uses the traditional apologetic technique of praising the motives and customs of pious Jews as being superior to those of contemporary paganism. The two fragments of the 'Hypothetica' which have survived in Eusebius, seem to represent a section from a larger work which may also have included the treatise 'On the Contemplative Life'. In this larger work -- an 'Apology for the Jews' -- Philo may well have been addressing some hostile critic as was Josephus in 'Against Apion'.

In the first fragment Philo refutes the slanderous accusations that Moses was a soothsayer; and in the second he gives a few of the weightier points of Jewish law. There does seem to be a remarkable similarity between Josephus' 'Contra Apionem', and this apologetic work of Philo's. Belkin suggests that there was an Alexandrian source behind them both <sup>66</sup>. Whether or not this is so, the fact that two distinct and in many ways different writers could write a defence of Judaism in such a similar way may well be indicative of a tradition of apologetics and the writing of replies on behalf of the Jews to hostile critics.

The general impression of the first extract is that Philo wants



to meet criticism by giving a rational presentation of the Jewish history. The Exodus is described as the movement of an increasing population seeking fresh land, and inspired by a yearning for their native land to travel there. The divine influence is admitted but it is given through dreams and visions, a strange way of treating the Exodus theophanies. The divine mission of Moses is kept in the background, but there is a touch of the Jewish sense of superiority when Philo writes in an ironic and almost sarcastic tone:

"Their departure and journey was made under the command of one who nothing differed from the ordinary run of men. So you may say what you like; indeed there are people who abused him as an impostor. Well that was a fine kind of imposture and knavery which enabled him to bring the whole people in safety amid drought and hunger and ignorance of the way and lack of everything as well as if they had abundance of everything ..... and to keep them free from internal factions and above all obedient to himself." <sup>67</sup>

When it comes to the occupation of Palestine, appeal to the miraculous element in the victories of Joshua is definitely set aside <sup>68</sup>. It is significant in an apologetic context, which is seeking to give rational and intellectual credibility to the religion, that appeal to miracles and wonder-working is played down.

The second extract from Philo's apology contains a description of the Jewish constitution, and it is noteworthy that it

contains much which is virtually ignored in the 'Exposition of the Law'. For example, little is said about the subjection of women, the inviolability of the dedicated offering in the 'Exposition of the Law', but much emphasis is laid on them here <sup>69</sup>. It was probably assumed by Philo that the Gentile readers he is addressing had read or would read the 'Exposition of the Law', so that there was no need for repetition.

The treatise 'On the Contemplative Life' is generally thought to have been a part of a larger work of 'Apology for the Jews' which was addressed to Gentiles. The treatise is a complete unit in itself, and describes the life of the Therapeutae, a group of Jewish monks, male and female, who lived in the desert outside Alexandria. The description of this ascetic community is introduced as a counterpart of the Essene group which are also described by Philo. The Essenes were a practical community, working and living communally; whereas the Therapeutae represented the contemplative life lived by them, valuing their solitude. Their life of solitude is relaxed on the Sabbath day when they meet to listen to a sermon, and sometimes they held a sort of festival. Before describing this symposium Philo gives a lengthy comparison with pagan feasts in order to show the superior motives and attitudes of this Jewish sect. The beginning of the treatise has an interesting apologetic tone:

"I will not add anything of my own procuring to improve upon the facts as is constantly done by poets and historians through lack of excellence in the lives and practices which they record. Though I know that in this case it is such as to unnerve the greatest master

of oratory, still we must persevere and not decline the conflict, for the magnitude of virtue shown by these men must not be allowed to tie the tongues of those who hold that nothing excellent should be passed over in silence." 70

Philo goes on to give lengthy comparisons of the absurdity and primitive character of pagan religious practices in the light of the piety and reasonable nature of Judaism especially as exemplified by the Therapeutae. Philo's familiar invective against sophistry also finds a place, and the plain speaking of the Jewish teachers is emphasised:

"Then the senior among them who has also the fullest knowledge of the doctrines which they possess comes forward and with visage and voice alike quiet and composed gives a well reasoned and wise discourse. He does not make an exhibition of clever rhetoric like the orators and sophists of today but follows careful examination by careful expression of the exact meaning of the thoughts, and this does not just lodge outside the ears of the audience but passes through the hearing into the soul and there stays securely." 71

The work of Philo shows how a scholar of Jewish traditions sought to present this semitic thought to a wider Hellenistic, cultural environment. He never gives up the specifically Jewish character of the traditions he presents, but he devises ways of making them appeal to the Greek mind by reinterpreting the biblical narratives and biblical history. In the next chapter on the 'Apologetic Presentation of the Figure of

Abraham', we also see how Philo makes use of the Old Testament 'hero' to help in his 'appeal' to the Hellenistic world.

Chapter 2. Notes - 'Hellenistic - Jewish Apologetic Literature'

(Philo as Apologist)

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### Josephus as Apologist

Josephus' aim in writing was mainly to gain imperial recognition and toleration for Judaism in spite of Jewish uprisings and in the face of prejudice and suspicion.

The life of Josephus (c.37-100 AD), can loosely be divided into two. The first can be described as that of Joseph Ben Matthias, Jewish priest and champion; and the second half as that of Flavius Josephus, Roman citizen and famous author. This division is of course somewhat arbitrary as the Roman Josephus was still the Jew who wrote to honour his fellow countrymen and to defend Judaism, even though he was considered by his Jewish contemporaries to be a traitor.

The defence and positive exposition of Judaism as presented by Josephus is framed in a historical context in two of his works -- 'The Jewish War' and 'The Jewish Antiquities'. The 'Jewish War' was published in Greek about 75 AD, and in it Josephus claims to demonstrate that 'they were the tyrants of the Jews who brought the Roman power upon us, who unwillingly attacked us, and occasioned the burning of our Holy city.'<sup>1</sup>

'The Jewish Antiquities' runs to twenty books and is Josephus' longest and most mature work. It is a history of the Jews, beginning with the creation, and is addressed to Greek readers with the aim of showing Judaism to be a rationally based and attractive religion and way of life. The 'Life' was added to the 'Antiquities', and was a treatise in self defence by Josephus to those who attacked him as a traitor and renegade. The Treatise 'Against Apion' can be analysed structurally in terms of rhetorical arrangement. In this treatise the refutation

of spiteful and prejudiced allegations from outside Judaism stands side by side with the positive exposition of the right understanding of the Jewish faith.

'Against Apion' is a classic example of an apologetic treatise meeting, answering and countering criticisms and arguments against Judaism. Notably, it contains some of the same lines of argumentation as employed by Philo, and this has in fact led S. Belkin to postulate an Alexandrian source behind both works <sup>2</sup>. At the very least, this coincidence must lead to the conclusion that there was a tradition of standard apologetic arguments in use in the first century, designed to argue in favour of Jewish beliefs and customs against criticism and slander.

Similar methods are employed by both Philo and Josephus in their respective apologetic presentations of Judaism. For example, both refute criticisms by reasoned argument rather than impassioned denial or show of indignation, giving undeniable evidence where possible, and highlighting the appeal of Judaism as a complete way of life in accordance with nature or the natural law. It is likely that these were not simply similarities in technique between two writers, but that such methods and argumentation were well known in the field of Jewish apologetics.

In the 'Jewish War' the apologetic intent is not so explicit as it is in the two later works, but the arguments in defence of the Jews are nevertheless to be found. Josephus aims to establish the greatness of the Romans, but not by decrying the Jews as feeble opponents; rather he means to show that only the Romans were great enough to overcome Jewish opposition, and even then only after a struggle. Josephus records Roman

triumphs, but at the same time portrays the Jews as worthy, if mistaken, opponents.

Although Josephus praises the Romans, he never ceases to respect his Jewish heritage. In the 'Jewish War', he was quick to criticise the Jews, but made it clear that he attacked only a particular, misguided generation, and he pays tribute to the Jewish scriptures and history.

Josephus always wished to be recognised as a great historian, and he also aimed at rehabilitating the Jews in the eyes of the Romans. In the 'Antiquities' he defends and praises the Jews on the basis of their history, and he adds the evidence of the high opinions held by past rulers concerning the Jewish people.

Apion had asserted that the Jews had failed to produce any geniuses, inventors or eminent sages <sup>3</sup>, and to refute this charge, Josephus refers in the 'Contra Apionem' to his own work 'The Antiquities of the Jews', where, he says, the reader will be able to discover for himself that the famous men produced by the Jews 'are entitled to rank with the highest' <sup>4</sup>.

'The Antiquities of the Jews' is addressed not merely to Greek-speaking Jews, but to the entire Greek-speaking world (1.5).

That it is a non-Jewish audience he has in mind is apparent from the fact that Josephus at the beginning seeks to establish that there is a precedent for communicating information about Jewish history to non-Jews (1.9), and that the Greeks had been curious to learn about Jewish history, as seen in the fact that Ptolemy Philadelphus had commissioned the translation of the Torah into Greek in the third century BC.

Josephus asserts that there are still many lovers of learning like that king (1.12). He further notes that only the first five books of the scriptures were translated for the king, whereas it is his intention to make available to his audience all the books of Jewish scripture <sup>5</sup>.

With regard to his writing, Josephus claimed that he was scrupulously honest and far more accurate than other writers and historians. In the Preface to Book 1 of 'The Jewish War' Josephus writes:

"The war of the Jews against the Romans, the greatest not only of the wars of our time, but, so far as accounts have reached us, well nigh of all that ever broke out between cities or nations, has not lacked its historians. Of these, however, some, having taken no part in the action, have collected by hearsay casual and contradictory stories which they have edited in rhetorical style; while others who witnessed the events, have, either from flattery of the Romans or from hatred of the Jews, misinterpreted the facts, their writings exhibiting alternately invective and encomium, but nowhere historical accuracy. In these circumstances, I - Josephus ..... propose to provide the subjects of the Roman Empire with a narrative of the facts ..."

In the very last sentence of the ~~book~~, he declares that he does not hesitate to make emphatic assertion that from the first word to the last, he has aimed at nothing but the truth. In the 'Life' he scornfully contrasts his own unimpeachable truthfulness with the demonstrable dishonesty of his opponent Justus; and as proof he gives his strict adherence to the facts in both his

use of official sources, and the warm commendations of Titus and Agrippa. The defence of his own conduct is really confined to the 'Life' and 'Jewish War'. Josephus was vulnerable to such attacks against his personal conduct as well as his interpretation of events as he wrote them down; he was well aware of this and did try to defend himself. He claims he had done his utmost to save the Jews from calamity in that he strove to avert the war. In Galilee, he says, in spite of opposition he had striven to carry out his orders, and had taken great personal risks and had fought heroically. When he submitted to the Romans he claimed that he did the rational and sensible thing, and that his intent even then was to win the favour of the Roman commander in order to be in a position to help his misguided countrymen.

In fact, Josephus may be said to overdo the self-praise and self-justification when he is defending his personal conduct. Whether or not he was a turncoat, and whether his motives were not personal but for the eventual help of the Jews, is irrelevant today. In retrospect, it may be claimed that Josephus' writings in defence of the Jews, must have been a great help in the attempts to make the Jews acceptable again as responsible members of the Roman Empire, and thereby secure their continued existence as a subject nation with some degree of self-determination at least in religion.

#### 'The Jewish War'

This work seems to have been originally written as a warning to the East of the futility of further opposition, and to allay any after-war thirst for revenge:

"If I dwelt at some length on this topic (the Roman army), my intention was not so much to extol the Romans, as to console those whom they have vanquished and to deter others who may be tempted to revolt." <sup>6</sup>

Josephus claims that his methods in writing the History of the Jewish War are more honest and truthful than the works of some other historians who manipulate the facts to fit their conclusions, and who use rhetorical style to overshadow the plain facts. Josephus disparages such historians, emphasising their lack of truthfulness:

"Though the writers in question presume to give their works the title of histories, yet throughout them, apart from the utter lack of sound information, they seem, in my opinion, to miss the mark. They desire to represent the Romans as a great nation, and yet they continually depreciate and disparage the actions of the Jews. But I fail to see how the conquerors of a puny people deserve to be accounted great." <sup>7</sup>

In effect, Josephus says that for all the manipulating of facts and dishonesty in relating the narrative, his simple telling of the facts will be more effective from every point of view - both the Romans and the Jews will be seen in their true light, and both have their creditable and their discreditable features. Whether or not Josephus is true to this objective remains to be seen:

"I have no intention of rivalling those who extol the Roman power by exaggerating the deeds of my compatriots. I shall faithfully recount the actions of both combatants; but in my reflections on the events I cannot conceal my

private sentiments, nor refuse to give my personal sympathies scope to bewail my country's misfortunes." <sup>8</sup>

Josephus, therefore, claims to be the impartial narrator of facts, and to a large extent this may be true, but he has no scruples in manipulating facts if it furthers a cause he supports <sup>9</sup>; the claims to be more honest and to tell the simple truth are really stylised literary conventions when embarking on the biased, 'apologetic' presentation of a cause, albeit composed within an accurate historical framework.

### 'The Antiquities of the Jews'

This work was undertaken by Josephus with the desire to give the educated Greek world a narrative which would remove those prejudices held against the Jews. Josephus aimed to present the history of the Jews in a framework and style that would render the subject attractive to his Greek audience for he was anxious that the latter should gain a respect for Judaism and the Jewish people. So Josephus writes as a historian and apologist, the one role complementing the other, and designed to present the Jews in a favourable light through the skilful (re)writing of their history.

At the start of 'The Antiquities of the Jews' Josephus explains his motives in embarking on his task:

"I have undertaken this present work in the belief that the whole Greek-speaking world will find it worthy of attention; for it will embrace our entire ancient history and political constitution, translated from the Hebrew records." <sup>10</sup>

In this introduction Josephus then goes on, with his Gentile readers in mind, to make the proposition seem an attractive one by promising excitement and action:

"The things narrated in the sacred scriptures are, however, innumerable, seeing that they embrace the history of five thousand years and recount all sorts of surprising reverses, many fortunes in war, heroic exploits of generals, and political revolutions." <sup>11</sup>

Josephus then appeals to his readers to approach the history of the Jews with an open mind, instead of continuing with a blind prejudice and dislike of the Jewish nation:

"I therefore entreat my readers to examine my work from this point of view. For, studying it in this spirit, nothing will appear to them unreasonable, nothing incongruous with the majesty of God and His love for men; everything indeed, is here set forth in keeping with the nature of the universe." <sup>12</sup>

'The Antiquities of the Jews' naturally falls into two parts, the dividing line at the close of the Exile (Book 10). In the first half Josephus is mainly dependent on scripture and traditional interpretation of scripture. He follows the Biblical narrative most of the time, but, with apologies to his own countrymen, he has rearranged (Ant. 4.196ff) and given a condensed version of the Mosaic code, reserving further details, he says, for a later treatise. It may be noted that both Philo and Josephus have a great respect for the Jewish Law, and their apologetic approach relies heavily on the presentation of the ideal figure of Moses. It is likely that Moses and the Law were the main pivot of Jewish apologetics - in Christian apologetics this place is taken by the figure of Christ.

Generally Josephus is true to the Biblical text, but a glaring



omission is the story of the golden calf and the breaking of the first tables of the law. This omission may be explained in the light of Josephus' apologetic motives: the Jews could not be portrayed in an unfavourable light, as disobedient and rebellious, for that would spoil the whole intent of the work as outlined above. There may be a parallel here with the two very different accounts of Joseph as given by Philo when he has a Gentile audience in mind the picture given of Joseph was necessarily a good one to suit his aims. Both these cases in Philo and Josephus are illustrative of how the audience addressed can affect the content in the interests of persuasion, and this consideration may well prove important when considering the Pauline writings.

#### 'Against Apion'

The apologetic motives lying behind the composition of this work are explicit, and it makes a strong appeal on behalf of the Jews who have been wrongly and spitefully abused. It is a complete treatise for the defence, supplying detailed evidence for its arguments, and is well thought out and well ordered.

The object of the treatise was to defend the Jews against the scorn of the Gentile philosophers who ridiculed, among other things, the Jewish pretensions to antiquity. Josephus produced the 'facts' and the arguments in confutation of these attacks. The second half of the work is taken up with answering the more general accusations against the Jews, accusations that must have contributed to the hatred and misconceptions of Judaism in the ancient world.

Josephus answers the assailants with a keen and comprehensive view of their follies, and then shows that the customs which they scorn were based on principles which in fact merited profound respect. The style in which Josephus writes, shows not only the confidence he has in the importance of his subject, but also the expectation of a profitable result for his efforts, and both add to the 'ethical' appeal of the introduction:

"I consider it my duty to devote a brief treatise to all these points; in order at once to convict our detractors of malignity and deliberate falsehood, to correct the ignorance of others, and to instruct all who desire to know the truth concerning the antiquity of the Jews." <sup>13</sup>

The first part of the treatise is concerned with the antiquity of the Jewish people. Josephus' general thesis is that the Greeks are untrustworthy on matters of antiquity because they are comparatively recent in their origins. The Greek historians contradict themselves because of the lack of official accounts. Josephus also alleges a lack of concern on their part for the truth. In contrast, the Jews took pains to compile official documents and showed great concern for the truth:

"Those (Greeks) who rushed into writing were concerned not so much to discover the truth, notwithstanding the profession which always comes readily from their pen, as to display their literary ability; and their choice of subject was determined by the prospect which it offered them of outshining their rivals.

..... each of these writers, in giving his divergent account of the same incidents, hoped thereby to be thought the most veracious of all." <sup>14</sup>

According to rhetorical guidelines, an essential ingredient of the early part of an apology is the establishing of the authority and integrity of the speaker, and Josephus asserts at the start both his ability to write and also his unquestionable methods as a historian who seeks the truth. Having established the validity of his methods and the veracity of sources with which he works, Josephus goes on to furnish proof for his theses from the writings of the Greeks, the best support he can win as his opponents can hardly reject the weight of such evidence:

"Now, Pythagoras, that ancient sage of Samos, who for wisdom and piety is ranked above all the philosophers, evidently not only knew of our institutions, but was even in those distant ages an admirer of them." <sup>15</sup>

Josephus then goes on to consider the 'authors who wrote against us'. Here, the grammarian, Apion, is mentioned, and Josephus refutes his misinformed allegations at length.

The refutation of spiteful and prejudiced allegations from outside Judaism was a major aspect of Jewish apologetics, as was the positive side which entailed the exposition and right understanding of Judaism. The more formal language used in the section against the allegations of Apion is reminiscent of the speeches made for the defense in a court of law, and it is significant that Josephus should himself mention such a surrounding:

"I think it incumbent upon me not to pass over without examination even this author (Apion), who has written an indictment of us formal enough for a court of law." <sup>16</sup>

The refutation of Apion carries on in this vein, so characteristic of judicial oratory for the defence. He gives an account of the

content of what Apion alleged concerning Moses, and then begins the defence with what amounts to almost stylised forensic pleading:

"..... Such is the grammarian's amazing statement. Its <sup>n</sup>medacious character needs no comment, it is exposed by the facts." <sup>17</sup>

Josephus' refutation of slanders against the Jewish customs shows all the skill, constraint, and consequent power of the most effective, experienced orator. He was defending what he genuinely believed to be an innocent party against an accuser who had used every possible chance to abuse and lie. Such is the impression Josephus aims to give.

A new note is struck when Josephus puts forward historical evidence as he mentions the esteem in which some of the kings of Egypt held the Jews, and he states that even the Emperor had acknowledged the services of the Jews:

"If Apion had read the letters of King Alexander and Ptolemy, son of Lagus, if he had set eyes on the papers of their successors on the throne of Egypt, or the slab which stands in Alexandria, recording the rights bestowed upon the Jews by Caesar the Great; if, I say, he knew these documents yet had the face to contradict them in what he wrote, he was a knave; if he had no knowledge of them, an arrogant fool." <sup>18</sup>

This more generalised defence making Apion look to be in the wrong whatever the particular circumstances, is followed by a defence to what was obviously an explicit charge by Apion against the Alexandrian Jews. This way of making the particular into the more general is common in forensic oratory:

"His astonishment at the idea of the Jews being called

Alexandrians shows similar stupidity. All persons invited to join a colony, however different their nationality, take the name of the founders.

..... Have not the Romans, in their generosity, imparted their name to well-nigh all mankind?" <sup>19</sup>

Josephus continues, in this way the accuser is made to stand as the accused, he is made to look silly and pathetic in his attempt to malign and condemn such a righteous and innocent people. Also continuing the theme of flattering the Romans that was seen in the last quotation, Josephus writes:

"Apion has attempted to denounce us on the ground that we do not erect statues of the Emperors. As if they (The Emperors) were ignorant of the fact and needed Apion to defend them! He should rather have admired the magnanimity and moderation of the Romans is not requiring their subjects to violate their national laws, and being content to accept such honours as the religious and legal obligations of the donors permit them to pay." <sup>20</sup>

Then a more positive explanation is given in the face of these charges, the author having, presumably, with that piece of sophisticated defensive rhetoric, won any Roman judges round to listen with a sympathetic ear to the following explanation:

"Our legislator, not in order to put as it were, a prophetic veto upon the honours paid to the Roman authority, but out of contempt for a practice profitable neither to God nor man, forbade the making of images, alike of any living creature, and much more of God ....

He did not, however, forbid the payment of homage of another

sort, secondary to that paid to God, to worthy men; such honours we do confer upon the Emperors and people of Rome." <sup>21</sup>

Josephus is arguing that the Jews have no images at all in explaining why they do not have one of the Emperor. There follows a section which refutes the ridicule of Jewish ritual laws and customs, and Josephus again asserts that, 'Fools must be refuted, not by argument, but the facts' <sup>22</sup>, thereby implying that such gossip-mongering and slander was not worth listening to and arguing against, because it could so easily be disproved by the facts. Thus Josephus goes on to explain the particular Jewish ritual customs that had been called into question, which is using the defense strategy that Aristotle calls 'non-artistic' proofs (see page <sup>33</sup> ).

The countering of Apion's ridicule completed, Josephus moves on to a more explicit defense of the Jewish law, and he states his reasons for this thus:

"Seeing that Apollonius Molon, Lysimachus, and others, partly from ignorance, mainly from ill will, have made reflections, which are neither just nor true, upon our lawgiver Moses and his code, maligning the one as a charlatan and impostor, and asserting that from the other we receive lessons in vice and none in virtue; I desire to give, to the best of my ability, a brief account of our constitution as a whole and its details. From this, I think, it will be apparent that we possess a code excellently designed to promote piety, friendly relations with each other, and humanity towards the world at large, besides justice, hardihood, and contempt of death." <sup>23</sup>

It is from this section that S. Belkin had postulated an

Alexandrian source behind it, and also behind the fragment of Philo's 'Hypothetica' that is preserved in Eusebius <sup>24</sup>. Belkin analyses the various laws which are emphasised here and finds no parallels in rabbinic sources, or indeed in the other works of Philo and Josephus alike; in fact some of those found in the 'Antiquities of the Jews' contradict some here in 'Contra Apionem'. The emphasis that is put on the various laws here is to show them to be more severe and to carry harsher penalties than the equivalent Roman ones. Josephus writes:

"I maintain that our legislator is the most ancient of all legislators in the records of the whole world ... Our lawgiver ... gave to his constitution the form of 'theocracy' -- placing all sovereignty and authority in the hands of God.

To this cause above all we owe our admirable harmony.

Unity and identity of religious belief, perfect uniformity in habits and customs, produce a very beautiful concord in human character." <sup>25</sup>

In defence of the Jews' separatism Josephus points out that Plato also wanted to keep certain persons from his republic, and the Lacedaemonians made a practice of expelling foreigners. He underlines the fact that the Jews are not the only ones who have practised this sort of separatism in order to preserve their own particular identity. He then goes on to explain that the Jews honour and obey their laws, and that they should be left in peace to do so:

"If then, our attachment to our laws is due to their excellence, let it be granted that they are excellent.

If, on the contrary, it be thought that the laws to which

we are so loyal are bad, what punishment can be too great for persons who transgress those that are better." <sup>26</sup>

The conclusion of the treatise reiterates the argument of Jewish claims to antiquity, and then further enhances this with an apologetic argument which is familiar in the writings of Philo, and is also found in the later Christian apologists:

"Our earliest imitators were the Greek philosophers, who, though ostensibly observing the laws of their own countries, yet in their conduct and philosophy were Moses' disciples advocating the simple life and friendly communion between man and man." <sup>27</sup>

Josephus rounds off his apology with an effective use of the rhetorical device of questioning in support of the thesis he has just forcefully stated:

"I would therefore boldly maintain that we have introduced to the rest of the world a large number of very beautiful ideas. What greater beauty than inviolable piety? What higher justice than obedience to the laws?" <sup>28</sup>

Finally, the stylised dedication at the end makes the apologetic motives that Josephus has in writing quite clear:

"To you, Epaphroditus, who are a devoted lover of truth, and for your sake to any who, like you, may wish to know the facts about our race, I beg to dedicate this and the preceding book." <sup>29</sup>

In Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic, much depended on the attempt to expound Judaism to non-Jews in terms with which they were familiar. Philo uses contemporary philosophy to this end; Josephus uses a historical framework for his apologia in 'Antiquities of the Jews', and the defence as might be given



in a courtroom in 'Against Apion' which attempt to defend and also to make Judaism acceptable as well as appealing to the cultural milieu of the Roman Empire. Positively, Josephus claims that the Jews can stand the comparison with any other nation as regards their antiquity, origin, culture, and religion. In effect, he expounds the advantages of monotheism as against polytheism, and he combines with this a profound respect for the Jewish history and law.

Josephus seeks to convert in the sense that he wants educated and intelligent men to acknowledge the good points that Judaism shows, and to dispel their misconception concerning the Jewish people. Basically, he seeks toleration, acceptance of, and respect for, the Jews in a hostile world. At the same time he underlines the essential rationality and appeal of the Jewish faith and way of life.

Chapter 2. Notes - 'Hellenistic - Jewish Apologetic Literature'(Josephus as Apologist)

1. 'Jewish War' I.4
2. Samuel Belkin - 'The Alexandrian Source of Contra Apionem II'  
J. Q. R. XXVII (1936) pp. 1.32
3. 'Against Apion' II. 135-136
4. 'Against Apion' II. 136
5. 'Antiquities' 1.5-9
6. 'Jewish War' III.108
7. 'Jewish War' I.7
8. 'Jewish War' I.9
9. For example, the over-emphasised flattery of the Roman Emperors, and defence of Antipas - surely written in the interests of self-preservation and defence.
10. 'Antiquities' I.5
11. 'Antiquities' I.13
12. 'Antiquities' I.24
13. 'Against Apion' 1.3
14. 'Against Apion' V.23
15. 'Against Apion' 1.8 c.f. 1.3
16. 'Against Apion' II.1ff
17. 'Against Apion' II.8ff
18. 'Against Apion' II.37
19. 'Against Apion' II.38
20. 'Against Apion' II.73ff
21. 'Against Apion' II.75
22. 'Against Apion' II.103
23. 'Against Apion' II.145
24. S. Belkin - op.cit
25. 'Against Apion' II.154, 165, 185



26. 'Against Apion' II.277
27. 'Against Apion' II.279-281
28. 'Against Apion' II.292
29. 'Against Apion' II.296

Chapter 3The Apologetic Use of the Figure of Abraham

I have surveyed the works of Philo and Josephus to illustrate their part in the apologetic literary movement of Hellenistic Judaism. This apologetic approach influenced the writing of Paul when he was faced with situations where he experienced antagonism both towards himself, and also as a result of a clash between Jewish and Greek ways of thinking.

One apologetic technique used by Paul, and found in pre-pauline Jewish literature, was the use made of great figures of the past such as Abraham and the (re)interpretation of the biblical texts relating to them. The presentation of Abraham in other Jewish works, and especially in Philo and Josephus, foreshadows that which Paul adopts in the face of growing legalistic tendencies in the early Christian communities, in particular in those of Galatia.

This technique of interpreting biblical narratives and Old Testament figures to meet criticism, or to endear Judaism to Hellenistic readers, was employed extensively by both Philo and Josephus in their apologetic presentations of Judaism. They make use of a biblical text to substantiate an argument, or portray the figures of the Patriarchs and Moses to reinforce their interpretation of Judaism.

In this chapter, the portrayal of Abraham and his place in history, illustrates how both Philo and Josephus (and later Paul), in differing ways, use this Old Testament figure in

working out an apologia through which to commend and explain the essentials of Judaism to the Hellenistic world. Abraham becomes the romantic, national hero, or the ideal of the philosopher-sage. Such interpretative use of Old Testament figures was a commonly-used apologetic technique in Hellenistic/Jewish propaganda literature, as the following survey shows.

### The figure of Abraham in Jewish Literature

In Judaism Abraham is the celebrated national and religious hero of the Jews, surrounded by innumerable legends and miracle stories. The details of Abraham's life are recorded in Genesis 11:26 - 25:10, which relate a series of incidents and events. Mention of Abraham in the rest of the Old Testament is mainly in connection with the Divine promises, or with reference to all three Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In Jewish writings, the covenant with Abraham, and the divine promises given to him are the most frequently cited with reference to the figure of Abraham; and 'Israel' is synonymous with the phrase 'the seed of Abraham'. Abraham is considered to be the founding father of Judaism and is revered as such. This notion is clearly seen in Isaiah where it is written:

"Listen to me you that follow after righteousness, you that seek the Lord. Look unto the rock whence you were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence you were dug.

Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bore you; for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him." <sup>1</sup>

The stories about Abraham in the Genesis narrative are disconnected,

and this points to a composition based on various traditions and sources. But in the form that we have it, these traditions have been put into a symmetrical and unified composition. They are encased in a framework of genealogies, and the first and last communications from God to Abraham. (Genesis 12:1 and Genesis 22:2).

The portrayal of the figure of Abraham in the non-canonical material shows numerous legendary extensions and details of his life as recorded in Genesis, and there are also various interpretations of these events to be found. Abraham has become a folk character conjuring up the images of divine promises and communication, and a means of conveying certain messages of the writers. A common inclusion into Abrahamic material is that Abraham underwent trials before he was blessed by God:

"With ten trials Abraham our father was tried, and he bore them all, to make known how great was the love of Abraham our father."<sup>2</sup>

In the Book of Judith, it is said that the trial through which Judith and the elders passed was not as extreme as the trial to which God put Abraham.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the author of 1 Maccabees includes Abraham in a list of Old Testament figures who were said to have endured much and to have been tested by God:

"Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and was it not reckoned to him for righteousness?"<sup>4</sup>

The appeal to these Old Testament characters is made to urge the Jews to continue to keep the law and even suffer martyrdom in the troubled times of the Maccabean period.

The same concern for the encroaching of Hellenistic culture on Jewish identity and traditions, is found in the 'Book of Jubilees'. R. H. Charles<sup>5</sup> places this book in the first

century BC, and certainly it does appear to be our oldest commentary on Genesis. It shows that the midrashic approach to scripture was fairly well advanced, for the Old Testament narrative is interpreted and related in such a way as to support the contentions of the author that the remedy for avoiding Gentile contamination was a rigid separation from Gentiles and strict adherence to the ancient laws of ritual purity. To illustrate these views the author of Jubilees traces the history of the Patriarchs, interpreting freely, omitting any doubtful elements (i.e. from the author's point of view) in the biblical text, and adding details which accord with his views.

The figure of Abraham is used by the author of Jubilees to support his concern of the dangers of Hellenism. Abraham is pictured as observing the 'Mosaic' regulations of ritual purity and separatism, and he is portrayed as a model of those who stand firm against the temptations of Hellenism.

It may be significant to ask why the author of Jubilees should choose Genesis and the figure of Abraham in order to convey this message, and not the Mosaic traditions which instituted the sacred laws, or one of the prophets who continually strove against syncretism and the like. The answer may well be that the figure of Abraham had already been used in other circles to prove the opposite conclusion - the Abrahamic traditions may have been prominent in the contention that extensive proselytism was acceptable as against those separatist Jews who considered it dangerous. If this was the case, then the more conservative Jewish circles represented by the author of Jubilees, needed to show Abraham in the light of their separatism and strict Torah-abiding interpretation of Judaism. This kind of attempt

at the retention of Abraham for reactionary circles can be seen in 'Jubilees', where Abraham is depicted as observing even the smallest details of ritual law. Furthermore, from the author's embittered attacks on paganisers and apostates, it seems that there had been attacks on the validity of the law, which he was countering by showing that Abraham, the founder of the Jewish people, had practised the letter of the law.<sup>6</sup>

The Jubilees version of the life of Abraham includes details and legends, not found in the Biblical narrative. The author made use of popular legends and traditions based on, and expanding, the biblical stories - for example, the record of the early life of Abraham,<sup>7</sup> and the account of how Abraham conducts a campaign against idolatry, and even burns a heathen temple.<sup>8</sup>

In some writings, the traditions of the conversion of Abraham from paganism, and the rationalising of explanations for not worshipping idols, are even more extended, and Abraham is depicted as exposing folly or commending certain qualities. Such legends surrounding the figure of Abraham were important in later missionary and apologetic works.

The figure of Abraham was used extensively by the apocalyptic writers of inter-Testamental Judaism. Abraham was often mentioned in connection with the last times, for example, the heavenly Jerusalem was said to have been revealed to Abraham.<sup>9</sup> The 'Apocalypse of Abraham' is a typical apocalypse centred upon Abraham. It falls into two distinct parts: the first part (chapters 1 - 8) consists of a midrashic type of narrative based on the legend of Abraham's conversion from idolatry; and



the second part (chapters 9 - 32) is apocalyptic in character, containing a revelation made to Abraham about the future of his race after his ascent to the heavenly regions under the guidance of the angel Jaoel - it is an embellishment of Abraham's trance in Genesis.15.

The 'Apocalypse of Abraham' begins with a description of Abraham's activities as a maker and seller of idols, Terah being a manufacturer of idols. The details are themselves embellishments of the simple Biblical narrative, but then the apocalypse continues in the same vein telling the reasons for Abraham's rejection of the religion of his father. This is story-telling with a didactic content. Abraham's doubts as to the justifiable character of idol worship are said to have been roused by an accident that happened to a stone image of Merumath, and by another accident to five other gods that were broken into pieces. The conclusions that Abraham reaches because of these accidents and the reasons for these conclusions are repeated twice, so as to apply to them the maximum amount of emphasis.<sup>10</sup>

The apocalyptic vision of Part Two runs from the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, to the Judgement where people are divided into those on the right and those on the left of God. In the Judgement, the destruction of the Temple is portrayed and it is explained that this is because of the sin of idolatry.

The earliest date for this book is after AD 70. It is not the particular dogmas contained in it that are of interest for this thesis, but the fact that even after the adoption into Christianity of Abraham as the example to the Gentiles, in Jewish circles the figure of Abraham was still being embellished and reflected on in

a way that would not really accord with the separatist type of Judaism that would be opposed to Christianity; so a liberal kind of Jewish thinking still used the typological way of seeing Abraham, and using the figure to portray its own message, in this case to portray the folly of idolatry and apostasy. Therefore, in the first Christian century we see that it was entirely legitimate to (re)interpret the Old Testament figures in order to convey a teaching, and this in their own ways, as we shall see, was exactly what Philo and later Paul in fact did. They both stand in a tradition which allowed the use and embellishment of biblical material to support arguments, and these arguments could point in different directions - for example, the different uses made of Abraham in Jubilees and by Philo.

Another work which uses the figure of Abraham is the 'Testament of Abraham' which is an expansion in Haggadic manner of the foretaste of the world to come which Abraham enjoyed before his death. It is apocalyptic in character in the sense that it is a revelation of heavenly things. M. R. James<sup>11</sup> believed that the final form of the 'Testament of Abraham' is probably medieval, and that although it is mainly Jewish in character, it does also show the work of a Christian hand. He adds that much of the material goes back to earlier times, perhaps even as far as a pre-Tannaitic Judaism. If this is the case, then the 'Testament of Abraham' is further evidence for the extensive use made of the figure of Abraham and his popularity through which many legends and stories became associated with him.

A further example of the use of the Genesis narrative and stories

of Abraham is the so-called (Genesis Apocryphon' from Qumran. It has similarities to 'The Book of Jubilees' in that it depends mainly on the canonical book of Genesis. The Genesis Apocryphon presents each patriarch telling his own story; the Biblical narrative is preserved to a large extent, but is frequently expanded by the addition of details. The Genesis Apocryphon is another example of the enhancing and use of the Old Testament stories and characters, and shows that the Qumran community also reworked and interpreted the patriarchal traditions in order to carry their own particular beliefs.

#### The Rabbinic view of Abraham

I have already touched on many of the legends and embellishments of the Abraham stories which are found in Jewish works. In general, rabbinic sources agree that Abraham was the first to recognise the existence of the supreme God, but they disagree as to the way he came to this recognition and at what age. One view concerning Abraham's conversion to monotheism is that Abraham comes to recognise God by a logical thought-process based on observations that the idols have no tangible power. On the other hand, the view found in 'Jubilees' is that Abraham had nothing to do with idolatry, but recognised the creator of all things from birth.

The Rabbis interpret Genesis 18, which relates an incident which shows Abraham's hospitality, as showing that Abraham was always hospitable. Furthermore, he was a great missionary because his hospitality led him to bring strangers under the 'wings of the shekinah'.<sup>12</sup> It is also said that as his circumciser came late in life that this should not be an obstacle to proselytes,

and that Abraham is the father of all proselytes.<sup>13</sup>

The rabbinic portrayal of Abraham reads back into the Biblical history its own interests and concerns. Abraham is presented as a scrupulous observer of the law, and anything that can be construed as contrary to this view has to be explained. For example, the problem that Abraham had left his father behind is overcome by explaining that this was not wrong because God had freed him from the law of respect for parents!<sup>14</sup>

The various and numerous traditions which grew up around the conversion of Abraham from idolatry to belief in one God, were useful to later apologists and missionaries for Judaism. They were able to point to the example of Abraham and enhance the rational basis of their faith by pointing to the reasons and logic which decided Abraham against idolatry.

Josephus cites what may have been an early form of the tradition surrounding the conversion of Abraham. He first praises Abraham as 'a person of great sagacity both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his judgement'. He goes on to say that Abraham was the first to say that there was only one God, the creator of the Universe; a conclusion he reached through observation of natural phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies.<sup>15</sup>

In this form of the tradition then, Abraham is depicted as the wise thinker who uses logical and rational deduction to arrive at his conclusions. A similar account of Abraham's conversion is found in Philo, although Abraham, there the wise and learned

astrologer, comes to comprehend the truth as a 'ray of light'.<sup>16</sup>

In both these forms of the tradition cited by Josephus and Philo, Abraham is presented as the wise philosopher who arrives at conclusions through logic and inspiration respectively.

The legendary material surrounding Abraham's conversion as it is found in the 'Book of Jubilees' and the 'Apocalypse of Abraham' has already been referred to. Similar legendary embellishment is seen in rabbinic literature, where Terah is also portrayed as a maker of idols with Abraham as his assistant, until Abraham comes to recognise the folly of idol worship.<sup>17</sup>

This tradition goes on to tell how Terah took Abraham to Nimrod where he argued that water, cloud, wind that scatters the cloud, man who endures the wind, as well as fire, could all be worshipped. Nimrod is said to answer Abraham by saying that he worshipped fire only, and that he would put Abraham into the middle of it, and let his God come and deliver him from it.

This last part of the legend, the casting into fire, takes many different forms in the various accounts. Among them is the story of Nimrod's fear at the birth of Abraham and his attempt to destroy him by fire.

The pseudonymous 'Antiquities of Philo' relates how Abraham was one of the twelve who refused to obey the command of Nimrod to build the tower of Babel. The other eleven fled to the hills.

The people were angry with Abraham and cast him into the furnace with the bricks. An earthquake brought by God caused the fire to consume all those nearby, but Abraham was unhurt.<sup>18</sup>

These different versions of the same legends which had grown out of the embellishments surrounding the Biblical text, show well the way in which the great figure of Abraham was used and extended for different reasons; the pre-conversion days of Abraham and his recognition of the one God are important themes in the material collected around Abraham.

The use of the figure of Abraham in order to present certain teaching and to further the cause of Judaism in Hellenistic circles, is tackled by Philo with interesting and extensive results.

#### Abraham in the thought of Philo

In Philo's work there is a 'literal' Abraham and an 'allegorical' Abraham. The literal Abraham can be described as the record of Abraham's body, and the allegorical Abraham is Philo's account of the progress and destiny of Abraham's soul. For Philo, the culmination of the religious experience is the 'vision of God', and this culmination is achieved by the sage who goes beyond the 'Encyclia' into true philosophy and virtue. Philo interprets passages from Genesis 12 and 15 to prove that Abraham had this culminating experience. For Philo, the patriarchs and Moses are examples of living according to nature.

It does not seem that the Philonic Abraham owes much of a debt to other conceptions or traditions of the Abrahamic figure.

Rather, Philo's work on Abraham shows again how this Old Testament figure could be interpreted to the advantage of the author. Abraham and the other patriarchs, along with Moses, are the most important of Philo's apologetic tools.

The two main sources for Philo's treatment of Abraham are 'The Migration of Abraham' (for the allegorical Abraham), and the treatise 'On Abraham' (for the literal Abraham). It should be noted that these two portrayals of Abraham in Philo are not mutually exclusive or even entirely different; what is different is the method by which the biblical narrative is interpreted, and perhaps the places where emphasis is laid in consideration of the different audiences which are addressed by the two portrayals.

#### The Allegorical Abraham

The treatise 'The Migration of Abraham' allegorises the Biblical narrative of Genesis 12:1-4,6. This contains the command to leave, the blessings bestowed on Abraham, and Abraham's departure. Philo uses the Biblical text as a peg on which to hang philosophical speculations, for example Philo interprets the command to leave for 'a land which I will show you' as the command to 'depart' from the body ('land'), senses (Kinsfolk) and speech (father's house), and attain to higher realities.

The treatise 'Who is the heir' is a commentary on Genesis 15:2-18 with comparatively few digressions. The first point to which Philo calls attention is Abraham's boldness of speech; silence is indeed more fitting in the ignorant, but a wise man has a right to boldness of speech.

The question is raised why Abraham's believing God should be counted to him as righteousness, for how can anyone disbelieve God? Philo says that while in itself there is nothing marvellous

in this belief yet in the view of the proneness of human nature to trust in lower things, it may well be described as a just or righteous action:

"And it is well said, 'his faith was counted to him righteousness' for nothing is so just or righteous as to put in God alone a trust which is pure and unalloyed. Yet this act of justice and conformity with nature has been held to be a marvel because of the trustlessness of most of us." 19

### The Literal Abraham

Philo starts his 'Exposition of the Law' with the assumption that the Pentateuch as a whole is a law book including the material which is not, strictly speaking, legislative. He develops the theory that Moses began by describing the foundation of the world and man which was to be governed by the law, and followed it by describing the lives of those who had observed these laws as yet unwritten. The characters, Enos, Enoch and Noah are said to represent respectively, hope, repentance, and justice. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob represent wisdom as acquired through teaching, nature and practice.

The treatise 'On Abraham' gives the main incidents of Abraham's life, not in chronological order but ~~but~~ to illustrate piety, hospitality and other virtues that are attributed to Abraham. The narrative is usually followed by an allegorical interpretation, but here this presupposes no knowledge of the Biblical passages beyond the particular one under discussion.



The dual interpretation of Abraham as a literal patriarchal figure, and as an allegorical 'type' continues through the treatise.

After depicting Abraham in general terms, Philo goes on to recount specific deeds within that context. Such deeds, he says, call for anything but contempt, and the greatest of these is the binding of Isaac. It is in connection with the latter that we see Philo explicitly defending Abraham. Objections are quoted concerning the practise of human and child sacrifice, which, it was claimed, was not unique or particularly praiseworthy; but Philo points to Abraham's motives which are shown to be honorable, and then concludes:

"..... let them, therefore, set both bar and bolt to their unbridled mouths, control their envy and hatred of excellence and not mar the virtues of men who have lived a good life." <sup>20</sup>

It is impossible to identify these opponents who find Abraham less than unique. What is significant, however, is that any such opposition should evoke such a response from Philo, for it points to Abraham's having been used before as the outstanding example of a pious and great man, indeed unique, perhaps in missionary and proselyting circles, and certainly in the commendation of Judaism and its antiquity. It was the same sort of scornful opposition that we find Josephus dismissing in the treatise 'Against Apion'. In view of this it may be concluded with some assurance that the figure of Abraham had long been used

in Judaism to convey teaching or illustrate virtues. Certainly this extract from Philo relates to some form of polemic or apologetic interchange between anti-Semites and Jews, and significantly, this argument centres on Abraham as a 'type' of a supremely virtuous man.

It is in connection with the narrative surrounding the death of Sarah that Philo veers significantly away from the portrayal of Abraham as the biblical patriarch. In this section of the treatise, Philo makes Abraham into the ideal Stoic type philosopher or sage, and the ideal of the philosopher king. The former picture is conveyed in the description of Abraham's restraint in his grief at Sarah's death.<sup>21</sup> Philo thus gives a picture of Abraham designed to appeal to a non-Jewish, or at least a highly hellenised Jewish reader. As is common practice in Philo's work, he uses non-Jewish philosophy to show that it can be seen to be compatible with Biblical conceptions.

The praise accorded Abraham because he 'trusted in God' is said by Philo to be a 'little thing if measured in words, but a very great thing if measured in actions'.<sup>22</sup> Human accomplishments are dismissed as unworthy, but faith in God is the one infallible good. This crowning praise ends the treatise:

"Such was the life of the first founder of the nation, one who obeyed the law some will say, but rather, as our discourse has shown, himself a law and an unwritten statute."<sup>23</sup>

Philo was eager for Gentiles to see the truth and be converted to Judaism. The theme of proselytism is especially dealt with in

the treatise 'On Virtues'. Here Abraham is characterised as a proselyte who became the 'most ancient member of the Jewish nation'.<sup>24</sup> Abraham 'is the standard of nobility for all proselytes'<sup>25</sup> according to Philo.

#### Abraham in the works of Josephus

It has already been seen that the figure of Abraham could be used in a variety of ways, such as to justify, indirectly, a mission to convert gentiles and unbelievers to Judaism, to bring them under the wings of the 'shekinah' as Abraham did. To this end Abraham could be depicted in hellenistic philosophic terms as the searcher and finder of the true God. Alternatively, Abraham might be represented as observing all the law even before it was revealed; this being a reaction to, and defence against, taunts that the father of their race was neither a monotheist nor was he circumcised at the start.

Josephus' apologetic technique of portraying Old Testament figures in glowing terms to make them appeal to Greek readers, and to refute the charge that the Jews had produced no inventors or sages<sup>26</sup> is clearly seen in his presentation of Abraham as the ideal statesman, possessing skill in persuasion, the power of logical deduction, and scientific knowledge. Abraham is shown to be original in his argument for the existence of God, and in his broad mindedness, including a willingness to be converted if defeated in argument, and in his unselfishness in sharing his scientific knowledge with Egyptian philosophers and scientists.

It is the Greeks who emerge, in comparison, as new comers to civilisation,<sup>27</sup> whereas it is Abraham who is the teacher of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, to whom, in turn, the Greek philosophers and scientists had turned for their inspiration.

In his portrayal of Abraham, Josephus stresses the qualities which would particularly appeal to a non-Jewish audience. Abraham is said to have been skilled in logic and persuasion<sup>28</sup>, a man of intelligence on all matters, one who has abandoned the falsehood of current theological ideas. In his description of how Abraham instructed the Egyptians<sup>29</sup>, Josephus stresses Abraham's intellectual gifts and skill in persuasion, and he is said to have gained the Egyptians' admiration as a man of the highest intelligence.<sup>30</sup> In Josephus' words Abraham was:

"..... a man of ready intelligence on all matters, persuasive with his hearers, and not mistaken in his inferences.

Hence he began to have a more lofty conception of virtue than the rest of mankind, and determined to reform and change the ideas universally current concerning God." <sup>31</sup>

The first and most prominent example of Abraham's power of logical deduction cited by Josephus is his proof of monotheism:

"This (that God is one) he inferred from the changes to which land and sea were subject, from the course of the sun and moon, and from all celestial phenomena." <sup>32</sup>

This approach helps to attract Greek readers to the figure of Abraham, and is also in keeping with Josephus' overall aim and apologetic purpose of defending the rationality and validity, as well as the antiquity of Judaism.

When Josephus narrates Abraham's journey and stay in Egypt, he adds to the biblical account, where the sole reason for Abraham's journey to Egypt was to escape the famine in Canaan. Josephus does state this, but he also adds that Abraham intended to go to hear the Egyptian priests discuss theology, and that he aimed to convert them to his superior doctrine if he finds theirs lacking. This explanation seems to be peculiar to Josephus who also says that Abraham is open minded and willing to be converted to their way of thinking if he considers it to be better than his own. <sup>33</sup>

Josephus proceeds to relate the events which happened in Egypt, and explains how Abraham became famous as an arguer and debater. The picture presented by Josephus of Abraham in debate which the Egyptians is that of an extremely intelligent, well educated hellenistic gentleman particularly gifted in the very areas most cultivated by the hellenistic Greeks - logic, philosophy, rhetoric and science. <sup>34</sup>

It is significant that Genesis chapter 13 is abridged by Josephus, bearing in mind his non-Jewish audience. He leaves out the divine promises of the land and also omits the covenant of Genesis chapter 15. This must surely have been done so as not to press the claims of the nation before a non-Jewish reader; claims that could damage the universalistic apologetic argument <sup>which</sup> with Josephus is centring on the figure of Abraham.

In Josephus' presentation of Abraham, the distinctive Jewish qualities are diminished; rather Josephus presents a picture of Abraham as a highly intellectual sage. This portrayal is designed

to appeal to Greek readers, and as such it is a part of Josephus' wider aims, to present Judaism as a whole as an essentially rational and superior philosophy. As L. H. Feldman says, 'Josephus, for apologetic reasons, presents Abraham as a typical national hero, such as was popular in hellenistic times, with emphasis on his qualities as a philosopher and scientist and as a general and national hero.' 35

The difference between the picture of Abraham in Josephus and that, for example, in Jubilees, may be explained in terms of the different readers being addressed. Jubilees aims to encourage Jews to adhere faithfully to Judaism, while Josephus' 'Antiquities' is designed to present an attractive picture of Judaism to non-Jews; hence such legends as Abraham's smashing of idols and burning of a heathen temple, would understandably be omitted by Josephus if he knew them. This sort of difference that can be seen in the various portrayals of Abraham illustrates the way that the Old Testament could be utilised to support differing conceptions, these various conceptions having already been formulated - in this way Abraham is used as the 'proof'. This is also the way round that is found in Paul; Paul's ideas are already formulated and he uses the figure of Abraham to illustrate and prove their validity, and this is the legitimate use, in apologetic terms, of the Old Testament text.

In conclusion, both Philo and Josephus, in differing ways, use the Old Testament figure of Abraham in working out an apologetic through which to commend and explain the essentials of Judaism to the hellenistic world. Abraham, the founding father of the Jews, becomes the romantic and national hero, the ideal philosopher

sage.

Such interpretative use of past figures was a powerful apologetic technique, and a common one in hellenistic/Jewish propaganda literature as we have seen in both Philo and Josephus. From the point of view of those who might attack Judaism for its prejudice and separatism, the figure of Abraham was used to show how the very father of the religion and race was the perfect example of philosopher and debater. From another point of view, in claiming the antiquity and worth of Judaism, Abraham is pictured as the one who predated even the Egyptians with superior intellectual learning and wisdom. Again, to those within Judaism, Abraham is a supreme example of one who followed the law before it was written down, this emphasising the rationality of the Jewish law and its being in agreement with the natural law.

All this shows that by Paul's time it was not only legitimate to make such use of the Old Testament characters, especially Abraham, in order to demonstrate propositions, but was in fact a common apologetic technique to use such typological argumentation in this way.

Chapter 3. Notes - The Apologetic Use of the Figure of Abraham

1. Isaiah 51 : 1-3
2. Pirke Aboth 5:4
3. Judith 8:26
4. I Maccabees 2:52
5. R. H. Charles - 'The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament'. 2 Vols. Oxford 1913
6. If this is the case then the use of Abrahamic traditions in such arguments is seen to have a long history before Paul's time.
7. Jubilees 11:16ff
8. Jubilees 12:2
9. 2 Baruch 4:4  
c.f. 4 Ezra 6:8
10. Apocalypse of Abraham Part I. 3
11. M. R. James - 'The Testament of Abraham'. Camb. 1892
12. 'Midrash Rabbah' - translated by Rabbi Dr. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon. Soncino Press. London 1951  
Midrash Rabbah on Genesis XLVIII. 8 (Page 409)
13. Midrash Rabbah on Genesis XLVI.2 (Page 389)
14. Midrash Rabbah on Genesis XXXIX. 7 (Page 316)
15. Josephus: 'Antiquities' 1.7
16. Philo: On Abraham 15ff
17. Midrash Rabbah on Genesis XXXVIII.13 (Page 310)
18. 'Antiquities of Philo' 6 : 3-18
19. Philo : Who is the Heir? 90-95
20. Philo: On Abraham 191
21. Philo: On Abraham 258
22. Philo: On Abraham 262
23. Philo: On Abraham 276
24. Philo: On Virtues 212-214



25. Philo: On Virtues 219
26. Josephus: Against Apion II.135
27. Josephus: Against Apion I. 7-8
28. Josephus: Against Apion I.154
29. Josephus: Against Apion I.167
30. Josephus: Against Apion I.154
31. Josephus: Antiquities I.154
32. Josephus: Antiquities I.154ff
33. Josephus: Antiquities I. 161
34. Josephus: Antiquities I.166
35. L. H. Feldman - 'Abraham the Greek Philosopher in Josephus'  
Transactions of the American Philological Assoc.  
99. 1968 Pages 143 - 156

### The Figure of Abraham in the Writings of Paul

Paul uses the Abraham material for his own apologetic ends. He reinterprets the older apologetic motifs of Abraham's obedience and faith, and he uses the figure of Abraham as a means of expounding the Christian message as he perceives it.

Paul presents Abraham as the father and prototype of Christian believers, and uses the Abraham biblical stories to justify the inclusion of the gentiles (Galatians 3), and also to prove the contention that man is justified by faith apart from works of law (Romans 4).

The use of Old Testament figures in presenting propaganda has already been seen to be an accepted part of apologetic method. G. W. H. Lampe<sup>1</sup> further points out that, 'in the early days of the apostolic missions when the gospel was proclaimed to Jews, the chief importance of typology, like that of prophecy, consisted in its value as a weapon for the apologist. The church teacher then had to show conclusively that the truth of his message could be proved from the sacred books, recognised by his audience as possessing authority.'

In the letters to the Galatians and to the Romans, Paul faces those who claimed that physical descent from Abraham, or physical incorporation into the children of Abraham through circumcision and observance of the law, was necessary for justification before God and salvation.<sup>2</sup> In opposition to such claims Paul concentrates attention on Abraham's role in history as the one who had received the divine promise and had responded with faith; in this way Abraham becomes a symbol and prototype of faith which

leads to the right relationship between God and man.

There is no essential difference in Paul's argument in Galatians chapters 3 and 4, for in both it is Paul's contention that the Christian is a descendent of Abraham (Galatians 3:39, Romans 4:16-17), and that Abraham is symbolic of faith, a 'type' of one justified by faith (Galatians 3:6,9, Romans 4:11-12, 17-22).

Paul draws the line of election from Abraham and his descendents to Christ and the church.

James D. Hester<sup>3</sup> sums this up when he says that, 'Faith might be the key to justification, but the historical Abraham is the key to understanding what justification means and brings ... for Paul, justification means sharing in the promise given to Abraham and fulfilled in Christ.'

#### Abraham as presented in the Letter to the Romans (4:1-24)

Chapter 6 argues that Romans is a deliberative apology which states Paul's position with regard to the Christian gospel as he understood it. The letter presents Paul's 'gospel' clearly and persuasively, meeting objections that could be raised as it goes along, and giving a reasoned and well argued case to the Roman Christians in order to enlist acceptance and support for the future.

On this view the aim of the letter to Rome was to persuade the Christians of Rome to accept this, the gospel commended by Paul, apostle to the Gentiles, and to adhere to it in spite of objections raised against it.

The rhetorical structure of the letter is seen to have ten propositions given in chapter 3:21-31, which correspond to ten 'proof' sections within Chapters 4:1 - 14:23 (see page ). If this is so, then the passage concerned with Abraham (chapter 4:1-24) constitutes the 'proof' for the proposition stated in chapter 3, verse 22. In chapter 3, verse 21 Paul introduces the content of the apology to follow, that "Now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, being attested by the law and the prophets". The propositions that follow will be stated then 'proved' by argumentation and the witness of scripture.

Chapter 3, verse 22 is the first of the propositions. It claims that 'the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ is for all who believe', and it is this statement that is to be 'proved' in 4:1-24, by making use of the figure of Abraham; claiming the latter in support for the Christian understanding and interpretation of the divine purpose. Paul makes Abraham the prototype of the Christian faith.

For the Jews, Abraham was the unquestioned father of their race and founder of their religion, and an important Jewish argument against the Christian church, and particularly those gentile Christians, would be that they were not descendants of Abraham and therefore could not number among the chosen people. Such Jewish claims are countered by Paul elsewhere when dealing with the figure of Abraham. <sup>4</sup>

In Romans 4:1-24 Paul sets out to prove the proposition that 'the righteousness of God, which is through faith in Jesus Christ, is for all who believe (3:22). Paul intends to use the figure of

Abraham to show that faith is the all important element in obtaining the right relationship with God, and that the faith shown by Abraham is paralleled in the Christians' faith. First, however, he has to demolish Jewish claims that Abraham was justified through works not merely because of his faith.

Romans 4:2 opens the Jewish case, and Professor Barrett <sup>5</sup> writes - 'it is clear that Paul must prove the contrary of this, and from scripture.' This is exactly what Paul does go on to do in verses 3ff. The first scriptural reference is to Genesis 15:6, and the argument from this (in verses 3-5) is summed up succinctly by Professor Barrett who comments thus: <sup>6</sup> 'This verse presupposes the conclusion already arrived at; faith and works are opposites, and Abraham is to be found among those who do not perform works with a view to justification but put their trust in God himself. This faith is counted as righteousness; that is, God justifies the man who has it, pronouncing over him a favourable verdict.'

Paul goes on to establish his own interpretation of Genesis 15:6 with reference to another scriptural passage. Paul makes use of Hillel's second rule of exegesis which explains that when the same word occurs in two biblical passages, each can be used to illuminate the other; <sup>7</sup> in this case the word 'count' or 'reckon' is found also in Psalm 32:1. The conclusion drawn from the quotation of Psalm 32:1 is that the 'counting of righteousness' is the same as the blessing of God when he chooses not to 'count' sin. In Romans 4:9, the argument moves forward with the question whether this blessing applies to those who are uncircumcised. With recourse back to Genesis 15:6, of course the answer must be that such a blessing was in fact given to Abraham before he was circumcised. <sup>8</sup>

Paul has now established some firm ground on which to build his case to prove the proposition of 3:22, and this is completed in verses 11-12 where he maintains that circumcision was a 'sign' of the faith of Abraham. Commenting on verse 12, Professor Barrett writes, 'Thus, like the whole paragraph, this parenthesis inverts the argument of Paul's Jewish objector. Abraham's circumcision, rightly understood, confirms not justification by works of law, but that of justification by faith.'<sup>9</sup>

Having countered Jewish claims concerning Abraham, Paul is now able to put forward the Christian case for seeing Abraham as the prototype of those who have faith and as the father of Christians who are heirs to the divine promises.

In chapter 4:13ff, Paul resumes the conclusion of the previous argument that the relationship between God and Abraham was not on the basis of law - this is expanded further with the contention that the promise was this basis. The promise, like the 'counting of righteousness' was dependent on man's faith and God's grace - 'only on the basis of faith and grace could the promise be secure for all who were destined to inherit.'<sup>10</sup> The claim that Abraham is the father of all believers, both Jew and gentile, is supported by reference to Genesis 17:5 in Romans 4:17. Paul goes on to show that this is a position held by Abraham because of his own faith which is explained with the narrative of Genesis 17:5ff in mind.

Paul's 'proof' based on argumentation concerned with the Abrahamic material, is concluded in verses 22-24. The quotation which he began with is noted again<sup>11</sup> indicating that the argument has now come full circle, and verses 23 & 24 apply it conclusively to the

Christian case: the Christian is justified in the same way as Abraham - his justification is based on faith and comes through God's grace - 'That which the Old Testament foreshadowed has become manifest in the death and resurrection of Jesus, in which God raised up his own son not from a dead womb but from the grave.' 12

#### Abraham as presented in Paul's letter to the Galatians

The passages concerned with the figure of Abraham in the letter to the Galatians are found in chapters 3 and 4, and these must be considered in the light of the purpose and structure of the letter as a whole. The letter to the Galatians presents a forensic style defence by Paul on behalf of his apostolic status and his presentation of the gospel as he had preached it in Galatia. The purpose of the letter is to defend the 'law free' gospel against Judaising opponents.

Following the analysis of the apologetic structure of Galatians outlined in chapter 7, the propositions of 2:15-21 are correspondingly 'proved' in 3:1-5:15, and much of this 'proof' section relies on the presentation of the figure of Abraham and the implications drawn from the interpretation of this material.

It will be argued that the Judaising opponents in Galatia had advanced their interpretation of the Gospel by claiming that Paul, who was subordinate to the apostles in Jerusalem, had preached only part of the gospel and that they were now completing it with the authority of Jerusalem behind them. Paul countered this approach by a clever defence strategy drawing out the 'old' law bound implications of circumcision and observance of the Jewish

calendar, thereby underlining the 'Gospel of freedom' he had preached to the Galatians, and leaving no doubts that the Judaizing position was opposed to him and in no way a perfection or completion of it.

H. D. Betz <sup>13</sup> notes that, 'Paul defends primarily, his 'gospel without law', that is, the inclusion of the gentiles into God's salvation on the basis of their 'faith in Jesus Christ', but without committing them to the Torah covenant ..... This assurance must be accompanied by a thorough demolition of the theological position of the anti-Paulinist opposition'; and as was pointed out in the case of Romans, this necessarily entailed adducing proof from scriptural quotation and interpretation.

The proposition stated in 2:15-16 is correspondingly expanded on and 'proved' in 3:1-14. The proposition is that man is not justified through works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ. Appeal is made first (3:1-5) to the personal experience of the Galatians. This constitutes indisputable evidence from first hand witnesses, for they cannot deny that they first received the spirit (i.e. became Christian believers) through Paul's message and not by works of law.

Paul then appeals (3:6ff) to the authority of scripture to support his case, arguing in a similar way to that of Romans 4:1-24 (see pages 231 ). In interpreting the Abraham traditions Paul argues that 'those of faith are the sons of Abraham' (3:7). This leads on to the natural extension of the argument in 3:15-4:11. This section was designed to support the proposition put forward in chapter 2:17,18.



Paul has been accused of departing from the original meaning of the text in verse 16ff and twisting it to suit his own design, for Paul applies to Christ, the promise made to Abraham and his 'seed'. The term 'seed' in the Abrahamic promise is a generic singular and refers to the posterity of Abraham as a whole. The Jews prided themselves on being descendants of Abraham and thereby recipients of the promises made to their forefather. However, Paul's argument begins with the premise that physical descent was no guarantee of spiritual relationship.<sup>14</sup> Paul contends that Christ is the 'seed' of the Abrahamic covenant, and he goes on to speak of the believers in Christ as sharing in the promises of that covenant, being Abraham's legitimate 'seed' (3:29). In this way, Paul 'deliberately furnishes them with a deeper application of the promises made to Abraham and to his 'seed'.<sup>15</sup>

The 'proof' section of 4:12-31 which takes up the proposition of 2:19,20 contains one of the most interesting passages of Pauline apologetic argument. In 4:21-31 Paul gives the famous allegory of Sarah and Hagar. The two women are taken to represent the two covenants. Hagar represents the Sinai covenant based on the law, and her children are in bondage to the law. Whereas Sarah represents the covenant of the promise, and she is the mother of the 'free' Christians.

Two commentators, Bligh<sup>16</sup> and Burton<sup>17</sup> have very different views of this allegorical section in Galatians. Bligh suggests that the Sarah/Hagar allegory was the climax of Paul's discourse at Antioch, and was immediately followed by an exhortation to stand firm and defend Christian liberty. He says that verses 21-31 would have been the final demonstration from scripture that the

law of Moses has no place in the gentile churches and must be excluded from them. Bligh also makes the interesting observation that, 'To the Judaisers Moses was the central figure of the Old Testament, and Christ was the new Moses; but for Paul, Abraham is the key figure and Christ is the 'seed' of Abraham to whom is given the Old Testament promises'.<sup>18</sup>

Burton introduces his comments on the allegory thus: 'Before leaving the subject of the seed of Abraham it occurs to the apostle, apparently as an after thought, that he might make his thought clearer and more persuasive by an allegorical interpretation of the history of Abraham and his two sons'.<sup>19</sup> It is surely not the case that Paul includes the allegory as an 'after thought' for it is crucial and an important part of his overall line of argumentation. Bligh is more correct in seeing it as a climax, a conclusive vindication from scripture, of Paul's presentation of the 'law free' gospel.

A far more convincing and illuminating way of looking at the arguments in Galatians chapters 3 and 4 is given by Professor Barrett<sup>20</sup> who suggests that 'Paul's words can best be explained if we may suppose that he is taking up passages that had been used by his opponents, correcting their exegesis, and showing that their Old Testament proof texts were on his side rather than theirs.'<sup>21</sup>

The Judaisers in Galatia would interpret the Genesis story of Sarah and Hagar in the same way as Jubilees (16:17ff), that only the descendants of Isaac (i.e. the Jews) are true 'sons of Abraham'; but as Professor Barrett notes, 'The Judaisers had

given it in its straightforward, literal meaning. It is over against this that Paul asserts that the matters in question are ἀλλήλοισιν (4:24).<sup>22</sup>

The arguments in Galatians 3 and 4 are basic to the understanding of Pauline theology and his presentation of the 'new', 'law free' gospel. Throughout the Letter to the Galatians is the personal defensive stand - Paul says that his authority and teaching are from God, that he does not preach circumcision because it is now unnecessary for the Christian is already the son and heir of Abraham through his faith. The allegory in chapter 4 enhances the point that Christians can claim 'spiritual' descent from Abraham - this in reply to a Judaising position that only those set aside through the sign of circumcision were sons of Abraham and heirs of the Old Testament promises.

Here in Galatians, in Romans chapter 4, and presumably in his preaching, Paul argued that Christians were the true sons of Abraham, and the allegory serves to drive home this point most forcibly. Not only is Abraham the father of believers, but Sarah is the mother, and the believers are proved legitimate.

Professor Barrett sums it up, 'Thus the physical descendants of Sarah became the spiritual descendants of Hagar, and the physical descendants of Hagar (generalised into the gentiles) became the spiritual descendants of Sarah, who inherit the divine promise.'<sup>23</sup>

In conclusion, the allegory of Galatians 4:21-31 must be seen against the overall purpose of the letter to the Galatians, with the Judaising opponents it undoubtedly means to rebuff. Professor Barrett's argument is convincing that Paul's opponents in Galatia had quoted texts as 'proof' for their Judaising gospel, so Paul uses

their methods and the same texts but to effect different results -  
to prove his case of the law free gospel.

Chapter 3. Notes - Figure of Abraham in Paul

1. G. W. H. Lampe - 'Essays on Typology'. London S. C. M. 1950  
Page 26ff - 'The Reasonableness of Typology'
2. The intensity of their claim can be gauged in the light of such a passage as 'Psalms of Solomon' 9:17 - "For thou hast chosen the seed of Abraham rather than all the Gentiles".
3. James D Hester : 'Paul's concept of Inheritance. A Contribution to the understanding of Heilsgeschichte'.  
S. J. Theol. Occasional Paper 14. 1968
4. Romans 4 : 11ff; 9 : 6-13; Galatians 3 : 7; 4 : 21 - 31
5. C. K. Barrett - 'The Epistle to the Romans'. London 1957  
Page 87.
6. C. K. Barrett. op.cit. Page 88
7. Hillel : Rule 2 - 'gezerah shaurah' (analogy)
8. The circumcision of Abraham comes in Genesis 17
9. C. K. Barrett. op.cit. Page 92
10. C. K. Barrett - op.cit. Page 96
11. See 4:22, Genesis 15:6
12. C. K. Barrett. op.cit. Page 99
13. H. D. Betz - 'In Defence of the Spirit', in 'Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and early Christianity'.  
Ed. Elizabeth Shussler-Fiorenza. 1976. Page 107
14. c.f. Romans 9:6b - 7a
15. David Daube - 'The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism'.  
London 1956. Page 441
16. John Bligh - 'Galations'. London 1969
17. E. de W. Burton - 'Galatians' I. C. C. 1921
18. J. Bligh - op.cit. Pages 390ff
19. E. de W. Burton - op.cit. Page 251
20. C. K. Barrett - 'The Allegory of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar in the Argument of Galatians'.  
Festschrift für Ernst Käsemann zum 70. Geburtstag. (1976)  
Pages 1 - 16

21. C. K. Barrett. op.cit. Page 6

In this context Professor Barrett points to the Old Testament texts of Genesis 15:6 (Galatians 3:6 c.f. Romans 4:3); Deut. 27:26 (Gal. 3:10); Lev. 18:5 (Gal. 3:12 c.f. Rom 10:5); Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 17:7; 22:18; 24:7 (Gal. 3:16)

22. C. K. Barrett op.cit. Page 10

23. C. K. Barrett op.cit. Page 16

## Chapter 4

The Apologetic Use of the Figure of Moses

Moses was a very prominent and important figure for Hellenistic/Jewish apologetic traditions, and was used in the Judaizing arguments of Paul's opponents in Galatia and Corinth. Paul countered Jewish claims and their arguments concerning Moses, by emphasising the significance of Abraham over against the 'fading' significance of Moses.

Like Abraham, Moses had been used extensively for the apologetic purposes of commending and defending Judaism in the Greek world. The figure of Moses is bound up almost inseparably with the Jewish law; Moses is presented as the wise lawgiver who established the Jewish culture on the foundations of ancient philosophical and religious tradition. As well as such positive portrayal of Moses, defence of the Old Testament character is necessitated by such anti-Jewish accounts of the Exodus which circulated in Egypt, where Moses is regarded as a renegade Egyptian priest who was followed by a group of unclean Egyptian exiles.

Certainly, Moses was by far the best known figure of Jewish history in the pagan world, and first and foremost he was known as the lawgiver of the Jews. After surveying pagan material concerning the figure of Moses, John G. Gager<sup>1</sup> comes to the conclusion that 'the portrayal of Moses in Graeco Roman tradition does not reflect knowledge of Jewish scriptures, but the influence of Jewish apologetics and the role of Moses as the national hero par excellence in this tradition.'

Moses is portrayed by both Philo and Josephus as uniquely important for subsequent Jewish history, both in his role as the receiver of the law, and as author of the Pentateuch as a whole. Moses is also recognised as one open to attack in the Greek world and therefore in need of defence and a 'good press'. For Philo, Moses is the most important Old Testament figure; the supreme leader and philosopher. He is Philo's greatest apologetic and missionary tool, and is presented as the unique fulfilment of Greek ideals as well as Jewish.

In Josephus' 'Against Apion', Moses is one who has been maliciously abused and must be defended against pagan attacks and misrepresentations. In the 'Antiquities of the Jews', a glaring omission in the Jewish history is that of the incident of the golden calf in the wilderness, showing further that Josephus was aware and sensitive to the objections and criticisms levelled at the stories surrounding the Exodus and Moses traditions.

The prominence of Moses in non-Jewish writers when referring to Judaism reflects the prominence of Moses in the Jewish tradition itself. Moses had become established in pagan eyes as the representative figure of Judaism. It is not surprising in view of this, and of Moses' close connection with the Jewish law, that Paul who wrote on behalf of Christianity and often against Judaising opposition, chose to virtually ignore the figure of Moses in his works, and instead look to Abraham as the most significant Old Testament personality.

According to the Pentateuch Moses was born in Egypt, escaped death at the hands of the Egyptians, was adopted by the Pharaoh's



daughter, but later fled from Egypt and lived as a shepherd. He received a divine commission to return to Egypt and lead the Israelites away. After opposition from Pharaoh he finally achieved this, becoming the leader of the Israelites as they lived in the wilderness country.

Tradition holds that Moses was responsible for writing the whole Pentateuch, but in fact scholars have long recognised a number of independent sources interwoven in the present Old Testament narrative.

A full and proper survey of the Pentateuchal portrayal(s) of Moses would constitute a thesis in itself, so for the purposes of this present study it is fair to conclude simply, that the historical Moses cannot be reconstructed in any pure form. The extant Old Testament material, though it may embody original sources, was the product of an already developed tradition which had been variously influenced under differing situations and ideas. This conclusion is also true of the patriarchal narratives, and it is in fact this very line of interpretation, polemic, apology and reinterpretation, which made it entirely acceptable for later apologists to do the same and make what they could from the Old Testament narrative, in support of their point through interpretation of them.

#### The Rabbinic Portrayal of Moses

For later Judaism the Torah had become the all important feature of their religion, and therefore Moses, as the one they believed responsible for it, was an important and popular figure. A

familiar and typical verse at the beginning of Pirke Aboth serves to illustrate the significance of Moses for the rabbis:

"Moses received Torah from Sinai and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets delivered it to the men of the Great Synagogue ..."<sup>2</sup>

This quotation takes for granted two points which were well known in rabbinic thought. Firstly, that Moses was not the one who thought up the law, he merely 'received' it, hence the law was of divine origin and pre-existed. Secondly, that the transmission of the Torah was unbroken and therefore unaltered. Furthermore, a notion which was widespread in rabbinic circles was that all halakic traditions, written or oral, were delivered to Moses at Sinai.

The rabbinic midrashim concerning the life of Moses have many expansions and embellishments of the biblical narrative. For example, the Midrash Rabbah on Exodus says that the Pharaoh's daughter had leprosy and went down to bathe, as soon as she touched the basket of Moses she was healed, and for this reason she saved Moses.<sup>3</sup> There is also a further embellishment to the text at this point for the midrash continues thus:

"And she opened it, and saw it. It does not say, 'And she saw' but 'And she saw it'. This is because, said R. Jose b. Hanina, she saw that the Shekinah was with him; i.e. 'it' refers to the shekinah that was with the child."<sup>4</sup>

The decree to kill all Hebrew male babies was said to have been

fulfilled after Moses had been cast into the water, and it was therefore rescinded from that time. Such embellishments to the biblical narrative continue and further examples include:

"Pharaoh sent word for the sword that had no equal, and struck him (Moses) ten times upon the neck, but the neck of Moses became like ivory and he could not harm him ...  
... When they seized Moses and condemned him to be beheaded an angel from heaven descended in the form of Moses, and while they seized the angel Moses escaped." <sup>5</sup>

The idea that Moses was Israel's greatest intercessor before God was a common one in later Jewish writings. The model for this was Moses' intervention during the golden calf incident. In the Exodus midrash the law court imagery is vivid:

"The ~~god~~ advocate knows how to present his case clearly before the tribunal. Moses is one of the two advocates that arose to defend Israel and set themselves as it were, against the Holy One. These were Moses and Daniel. (see Daniel 9:3)." <sup>6</sup>

Moses as the defender of Israel before God was a widespread notion, but the different circles within Judaism were in disagreement as to whether Moses was the supreme example of an advocate as shown in his capacity as such for the wilderness generation, or whether he still continued to plead on Israel's behalf, this notion raises the question as to whether Moses died or was 'translated' to heaven.

The rabbinic portrayal of Moses, then, is one which expands the biblical narrative, emphasising the superior qualities of Moses as a leader and 'man of God'. Moses was chiefly associated with

the giving of the law and its transmission to rabbinic tradition. There were many further legends and stories which accumulated around the prominent figure of Moses, such as those found in the work known as 'The Assumption of Moses'.

The 'Assumption of Moses' was most probably written during the first half of the first century. It contains a speech of Moses to Joshua which purports to prophesy the history of the Israelites. R. H. Charles believed that it was the work of a Pharisee who disliked the moves towards secularisation in his party, and aimed to recall them to the old ideals of the law through this work. <sup>7</sup>

It is especially the account of the beginning and end of Moses' life that is interesting in the 'Assumption of Moses'. Moses is said to have been prepared before the creation to be the mediator of God's covenant (1:14, 3:12), it is claimed that his death was no ordinary one (1:15, 3:13, 19:12, 14), and that no single place was worthy to mark the place of his burial; the entire world was his sepulchre (11:18).

The death or assumption of Moses was a point on which the Moses traditions divided. The statement in Deuteronomy that 'no man knows his grave' was most probably an important element in spreading the theory that Moses did not die a natural death but was translated into heaven. In turn it is this 'assumption theory' that led to speculations about Moses' eschatological role.

The eschatological significance of the figure of Moses is the aspect of Moses haggadah most frequently discussed in connection with New Testament study; the expectation of a second Moses and

parallels with wilderness traditions.

However, Paul probably considered the eschatological and messianic speculations about Moses and parallels between Moses and Christ as possibly dangerous when the implications for the question of the Jewish law were realised. How quickly Paul's Gentile converts would have been won over and subjected to the law by the Judaisers, if Paul hadn't taken the precaution to make it clear that the law was now abrogated in Christ. In view of this I will not spend time surveying the Jewish and Qumran texts which point to an eschatological role for Moses, or on the New Testament passages which point to messianic implications in the figure of Moses and parallels with Christ. Instead I will now go on to consider the material concerning Moses in the works of Philo and Josephus noting how they both use the figure of Moses in a positive apologetic way to commend Judaism to the Greek world, and also point to places where these two apologists for Judaism have to counter attacks made on the character of Moses and guard against misrepresentation.

#### Philo's Portrayal of Moses

Philo's account of Moses is found in the treatise 'The Life of Moses', located in the 'Exposition of the Law'. Moses is portrayed as the ideal Jew, and also as the embodiment of the perfect man as envisaged in Greek culture.

In the introduction to Philo's allegorical work Moses is commended as 'one who excites our admiration to the highest degree'.<sup>8</sup> In the treatise 'the life of Moses' the material is arranged under four headings - king, lawgiver, priest and prophet. This leads

Philo into a chronological muddle, for example, the Sinai theophany is omitted, while the crossing of the Red Sea, the golden calf story and the giving of the Manna are related more than once. Philo's apologetic purpose is thus made clear; his intention is to emphasise points that portray Moses in a certain way rather than to simply narrate the events in the life of this Old Testament figure. It is the characteristics which present Moses as the ideal man and leader which are emphasised or even repeated, and in so doing Philo means to win for Moses the respect of non-Jewish readers. Such a purpose is explicitly stated by Philo when he writes:

"I propose to write the life of Moses, whom some describe as legislator of the Jews, others as interpreter of the Holy Laws. I hope to bring the story of this greatest and most perfect man to the knowledge of such as deserve not to remain in ignorance of it: for, while the fame of the laws which he left behind him has travelled throughout the civilised world and reached the ends of the earth, the man himself as he really was is known to few. Greek men of letters have refused to treat him as worthy of memory, possibly through envy .... but I will disregard their malice, and tell the story of Moses." <sup>9</sup>

The following account of Moses as given by Philo is an idealised portrait of the Old Testament figure, and includes many midrashic type embellishments. For example, concerning Moses' adoption by the Pharaoh's daughter, we are told:

"He (Moses) was noble and goodly to look on, and the princess, seeing him so advanced beyond his age, conceived for him an even greater fondness than before, took him for

her son, having at an earlier time artificially enlarged the figure of her womb to make him pass as her real and not supposititious child." <sup>10</sup>

W. A. Meeks <sup>11</sup> argues that Philo's selection of the Virtues of Moses; the miraculous progress and educational abilities as a child, are deliberately chosen as they are the mark of the semi-divine king of the hellenistic royal ideology. Certainly the primary interest of the first book is to portray Moses as a great king. There is a gradual build-up and accumulation of Moses' acquisition of knowledge of all kinds of learning and disciplines - science, astrology and music.

The description given by Philo of the oppression and the sad state of the Jews in Egypt is built up and emphasised so as to give emotional appeal and to ensure sympathy from the readers. The cruelty of the overseers is emphasised especially so as to take any blame away from Moses for the killing of the Egyptian guard. The guards are described as 'beasts in human shape' and 'venomous and carnivorous animals'. <sup>12</sup> Moses' action in killing the guard is justified thus:

"Moses considered his action in killing him was a righteous action. And righteous it was that one who only lived to destroy men should himself be destroyed." <sup>13</sup>

Philo gives as the reason for Moses' going from Egypt the lies told to the king by Moses' enemies, jealous of his ambitions for the throne. Moses is then depicted as living in the country, using the 'reason within him' in order to 'fit himself for life in its highest forms'. Moses' life as a shepherd is vividly described, and Philo makes the comment:

"My opinion, based not on the opinions of the multitude but on my own enquiry after truth is that the only perfect king (let him laugh who will) is the one who is skilled in the knowledge of shepherding, one who has been trained by management of the inferior creatures to manage the superior." <sup>14</sup>

Philo proceeds to explain that when Moses was made king of the Israelites he showed himself to be the ideal king; he didn't seek wealth or promote his sons. Much of this is stock Stoic monarchism but one cannot help wondering if Philo here is not waging a polemic against the activities of contemporary rulers, and if he is then this would make his point all the stronger - Moses did none of the things that present rulers do that the people do not like.

In relating the story of the crossing of the Red Sea, Philo mainly plays down the miraculous element, and a rational explanation finds its way into the narrative, perhaps for the benefit of Greek readers or hellenised Jews. <sup>15</sup> On the other hand the picture given is very exciting and vivid, and Philo cannot altogether resist including a hint of the miraculous in the part played by Moses:

"But at sunset a south wind of tremendous violence arose, and, as it rushed down, the sea under it was driven back, and, though regularly tidal, was on this occasion more than usually so, and swept as into a chasm or whirlpool, when driven against the shore. No star appeared but a thick black cloud covered the whole heaven and the murkiness of night struck terror into the pursuers. Moses, now, at



God's command, smote the sea with his staff, and as he did so it broke and parted in two." <sup>16</sup>

This language is sufficiently 'heroic' to give the whole story a gravity and powerfulness that the Greek epics would not have been ashamed of.

The portrayal of the Israelites in the desert is an equally skilful one. It has subtlety in that it does not simply leave out an embarrassing part as does Josephus. The 'grumbling' is said quite explicitly to be wrong, but good reasons for it are described in detail and the implication is that it was only human nature to complain in these circumstances. <sup>17</sup> By contrast, the coolness and leadership qualities of Moses are brought out. <sup>18</sup> Philo also emphasises the compassion of Moses under difficult conditions. <sup>19</sup>

Philo ends the first book of the 'Life of Moses' by saying that he has dealt with the actions of Moses in his 'capacity as king' <sup>20</sup> and he says that he will go on to describe his functions as a legislator, priest and prophet. In the second book, Philo begins by explaining the relationships between these various offices held by Moses. The relation between kingship and legislation is close, and Philo describes his notion of the 'living law' <sup>21</sup>. That the king should be a priest as well is regarded by Philo as natural, for the king must supervise 'divine matters' as well as 'human matters'. <sup>22</sup> Philo goes on to describe Moses' prophetic office. Philo's all-embracing aim is to present Moses as the great hero of the past; the one who fulfils the ideals of all creeds.

In his treatment of the prophetic side of Moses' character, Philo flatters him unceasingly, and the highlight is the return of Moses after the forty days he spent with bare necessities:

"Then, after the said forty days had passed, he descended with a countenance far more beautiful than when he ascended, so that those who saw him were filled with awe and amazement; nor could their eyes continue to stand the dazzling brightness that flashed from him like the rays of the sun." <sup>23</sup>

Lastly, it should be noted that Philo takes for granted that the words of Deuteronomy 34:6 - 'No man knows his grave' - means that Moses was 'translated' into heaven. The end of Moses' life was an ascent, 'abandoning mortal life to be made immortal'. <sup>24</sup>

This brief survey of the way that Moses is portrayed by Philo in the two books 'The Life of Moses' is enough for one to appreciate the different attitude taken by Philo when we read the 'Hypothetica', two fragments of which are preserved by Eusebius. S. Belkin <sup>25</sup> has argued convincingly that behind Philo's 'Hypothetica' there is an Alexandrian source. This may be sufficient to explain the radically different portrayals of Moses in the 'Hypothetica' when compared with Philo's other work. On the other hand, the fact that Philo put his name to this work is further evidence pointing to its being acceptable to change the image of an Old Testament character to suit the case or apology in question.

In the first fragment of the 'Hypothetica' the impression is that Philo wished to meet the hostile criticism of Gentiles by giving a rationalistic version of Israel's history. The Exodus is

described as the movement of an increasing population seeking fresh land and space. The divine influence is admitted, but only when mediated through dreams and visions; and the divine mission of Moses is definitely kept in the background. This very different portrayal of Moses is intended, perhaps, as a defence before a sceptical audience, rather than the more commendatory picture as in the 'Life of Moses' intended to appeal to a more sympathetic audience.

In this first fragment of the 'Hypothetica', commenting that 'their departure and journey' was made 'under the command of one who nothing differed from the ordinary run of men', Philo defends Moses with a biting sarcasm and absolute disdain for such unfounded abuse:

"Well, that was a fine kind of imposture and knavery which enabled him to bring the whole people in complete safety amid drought and hunger and ignorance on the way and lack of everything as well as if they had abundance of everything ... ".<sup>26</sup>

As Philo continues, the sarcastic strain becomes less pronounced and a softer tone is taken. Philo appeals to the understanding of his readers in reasonable tones:

"Whichever you choose, the fact remains that so great was their veneration for that man who gave them their laws that anything which approved itself to him approved itself to them."<sup>27</sup>

A significant point is brought out by Meeks who says that Philo employs the figure of Moses in a broad cultural context, and also in a more immediate political struggle. Viewed against the

unfavourable position of the Jewish community in Alexandria in Philo's time, Meeks makes the cogent point that 'the story of a hero who first mastered the lore and rule of Egypt and then led the Jews in successful rebellion against the Egyptians and escaped from their oppressive rule can hardly be told as casual history'.<sup>28</sup>

#### Josephus's portrayal of Moses

In the 'Antiquities of the Jews', Josephus not only writes history but also aims to show through the history that Hellenism's best ideals are fulfilled in Judaism. In the first half of the book Josephus is mainly dependent on scripture and the traditional interpretation of that scripture, and as a rule he follows closely the order of the biblical narrative. On the other hand he does omit, and for apologetic reasons, the incident of the golden calf and the breaking of the first tables of the law. As a Jewish apologist he has to be careful not to give fuel to current slanders about the Jews.

Josephus claims that he adds nothing to the biblical accounts, but in fact he incorporates legendary amplification and interpretation. For example, in the story of the early life of Moses, Pharaoh's daughter is said to have brought the child Moses to the king who agreed that he was to succeed to the throne. There is no hint of a deception that this was her child as in Philo. A crown was placed on the child's head, and he threw it off and trampled on it - this, says Josephus, was 'an omen of evil import to the kingdom.'<sup>29</sup>

The presentation of Moses as a leader and general is a part of his character that is quite prominent in Josephus' portrayal of

him.<sup>30</sup> This military side to the character of Moses is not found in Philo's picture of him. This difference between Philo's and Josephus's portrayals of Moses is important for it shows that both writers could show their 'hero' in whatever light they chose. Although the picture as a military leader can be shown to fit in with the Deuteronomic picture of him, it is also a particular interest of Josephus, and an addition to the story of Moses which is peculiar to his work comes when Moses returns from Sinai 'radiant and high-hearted' and delivers a speech. This speech is unparalleled in scripture.

The two passages at the beginning and end of 'Antiquities of the Jews' may be quoted as they illustrate the way that Josephus presents Moses:

"I must first speak briefly of him (Moses) lest any of my readers should ask how it is that so much of my work, which professes to be about laws and historical facts, is devoted to natural philosophy. Be it known then, that that sage deemed it above all necessary, for one who will order his life aright and also legislate for others, first to study the nature of God, and then, having contemplated his works with the eye of reason, to imitate as far as possible that best of all knowledge and endeavour to follow it."<sup>31</sup>

This picture of Moses as the perfect sage is similar to Philo's presentation of the same; both writers, as Jewish apologists, present both Moses and the Jewish law as eminently reasonable and good. Josephus sums up the character of Moses thus:

"He departed ... having surpassed in understanding all

men that ever lived and put to noblest use the fruit of his reflections. In speeches and addresses to the crowd he found favour in every way, but chiefly through his thorough command of his passions .....

As a general he had few to equal him, as a prophet none  
 .... ". 32

The portrayal of Moses as a man of wisdom and great leadership is common to both Philo and Josephus. Significantly, Josephus never refers to Moses as a king. He must have been aware of the kingship traditions surrounding Moses, but he doesn't refer to them himself. A probable explanation of this may be his concern to 'play down' the Jewish nationalist claims.

Josephus's treatise 'Against Apion' is explicitly apologetic from beginning to end. The whole point and aim in writing it was to offer a defence against specific allegations that had been made against the Jews. Josephus declares:

"I consider it my duty to devote a treatise to these points, in order at once to convict our detractors of malignity and deliberate falsehood, to correct the ignorance of others and to instruct all who desire to know the truth concerning the antiquity of our race." 33

This is exactly what Josephus goes on to do, and this necessitates a defence of the figure of Moses. He quotes from the work of Apion, and then comments thus:

"In the third book of his 'History of Egypt' he makes the following statement: 'Moses, as I have heard from old people in Egypt, was a native of Heliopolis, who, being pledged to the customs of his country, erected

prayer houses, open to the air, in the various precincts of the city, all facing eastwards; such being the orientation of Heliopolis. In place of obelisks he set up pillars, beneath which was a model .....

Such is the grammarian's amazing statement. Its mendacious character needs no comment, it is exposed by the facts." <sup>34</sup>

Later in the treatise Josephus gives an account of the Jewish 'theocratic' constitution to refute charges that Moses was a 'charlatan and impostor'; he claims that Moses, 'our legislator is the most ancient of all legislators in the records of the world'. <sup>35</sup>

To conclude, it is fair to say that the overall picture of Moses as given by Josephus, is a fairly moderate one. Josephus is well aware of the scepticism of his readers, and this probably accounts for the tameness of his portrayal of Moses as it explains Josephus's having omitted such an incident as that of the golden calf.

In Hellenistic/Jewish apologetic writing, the figure of Moses was used as the supreme example of the ideal lawgiver, general, prophet and king, in order to commend Judaism to the Greek world. Both Philo and Josephus use Moses extensively to support their arguments and substantiate claims they have made on behalf of Judaism. Philo even used Moses in two different ways, varying the interpretation to suit his purposes.

The Old Testament character of Moses in Hellenistic/Jewish apologetic was basic to the presentation of Judaism, for those

apologists Moses was a central and important figure; their most useful 'apologetic tool'.



Chapter 4. Notes - 'The Apologetic Use of the figure of Moses'

1. John G. Gager - 'The figure of Moses in Greek and Roman Pagan literature'.  
Diss. Harvard. 1968. Page 77
2. Pirke Aboth I.1
3. Midrash Rabbah - Exodus translated by Rabbi Dr. S. M. Lehrman.  
Soncino Press. London 1951  
Midrash on Exodus I.23. (Page 29)
4. Midrash on Exodus I.24. (Pages 29-30)
5. Midrash on Exodus I.31. (Page 39)
6. Midrash on Exodus XLIII.1. (Page 494)
7. R. H. Charles - 'Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament'  
Ox. 1913
8. Philo: 'On Creation' 1
9. Philo: 'Moses' I.4
10. Philo: Moses I.19
11. Wayne A. Meeks - 'Moses as God and King'  
J. T. R. 14 '68. pp. 354-71
12. Philo: 'Moses' I.40
13. Philo: 'Moses' I.43
14. Philo: 'Moses' I.62
15. Philo: 'Moses' I.170ff
16. Philo: 'Moses' I.176
17. Philo: 'Moses' I.184
18. Philo: Moses I.184
19. Philo: Moses I.196
20. Philo: Moses I.334
21. Philo: Moses II.4-6
22. Philo: Moses II.6-7
23. Philo: Moses II. 70 cf. Ex. 24:18,28ff
24. Philo: Moses II.288-292

25. Samuel Belkin - 'The Alexandrian Source for Contra Apionem II'  
J. Q. R. XXVII (1936) pp 1-32
26. Philo : Hypothesica I. 2
27. Philo : Hypothesica I. 8
28. Wayne A. Meeks - op.cit. page 360
29. Josephus : Antiquities II. 232
30. Josephus : Antiquities IV. 165
31. Josephus : Antiquities IV. 18
32. Josephus : Antiquities IV. 327
33. Josephus : Against Apion I.3
34. Josephus : Against Apion II.8
35. Josephus : Against Apion II.145

The Portrayal of Moses in Paul

The question which must be posed here is whether Paul uses the figure of Moses as a positive apologetic tool as he used Abraham (see chapter 3). If he does not, then it must be asked, why not? The answer to the first question must surely be negative, for Paul's use of Moses as an individual figure or 'type' is virtually non-existent; the person of Moses cannot be separated from Paul's polemic concerning the Jewish law. Paul does not use Moses in a positive apologetic way as he uses Abraham, and furthermore, it may be shown that Paul replaces much of the force of the appeal and argumentation associated with Moses in hellenistic-Jewish apologetic literature, with that of Abraham in his understanding and interpretation of Biblical history.

Paul argues from the Abrahamic traditions, that the divine promises are now fulfilled in Christ and the church. The Mosaic covenant, on the other hand, and the law, are said to have had only temporary status which is now superseded. Paul uses the wilderness events of Mosaic tradition merely as examples from which Christians could learn not to make similar mistakes (see 1 Corinthians 10).

Paul was probably aware of the messianic speculation surrounding Moses which is even found within the New Testament, but these are motifs from which he deliberately steers clear because of the implications they hold in relation to the law. In Paul's time, the question of the Jewish law and Christians, was a hotly debated one, and Paul must take the credit for separating, in those early days, Christianity from the 'old' Pharisaic legalism; he probably thereby prevented Christianity from being just another Jewish sectarian movement. It was only later when the question

of the law and Christianity had been more or less resolved and a compromise situation accepted, that the Moses imagery as it is found in the Fourth Gospel for example, lost its dangerous implications with regard to the Jewish law. In Paul's letters, therefore, the importance of Moses is played down. Where Paul does mention Moses in his own right, it is in a very negative way. For example, in 2 Corinthians 3, he says that the old glory has faded, and throws doubts on Moses' motives for the veiling of his face. The point in 2 Corinthians 3 is to contrast the old covenant based on the law, and the new covenant - the Christian faith, and the effect is achieved in the playing down the significance of the Mosaic traditions in contrast to the superiority of the Christian ones.

For Paul, the figure of Moses is synonymous with the old law, the old covenant and the old ministry. This is consistent in Paul, for when a positive reference to Mosaic traditions might be expected, it is notable by its absence. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10:17ff the Jeremiah prophecy of the new covenant is used in place of the Mosaic Passover motifs. A similar theme is found in Galatians 4:21-31, where the Sinai covenant is said to lead only to bondage.

Paul deliberately avoids using Moses in a positive way, and this may be explained in the light of the implications this would raise with regard to the Jewish law, for through the efforts of Jewish propaganda and apologetics Moses was regarded as the great legislator, and Moses was therefore closely associated with the Jewish law. Paul sets out to show the difference between

the 'old' and the 'new', so Moses could be of no positive use to Paul in this.

In Paul's presentation of salvation-history, the law and Mosaic covenant were considered as being of only temporary significance, lasting until the promises made to Abraham were fulfilled in Christ. In such a scheme of history, Christ viewed as a new Moses would be unthinkable, as this would afford Christ only a temporary significance also. It follows, therefore, that Paul must correct any tendencies to do this in the early church. Such an aim may be seen behind the argumentation in 2 Corinthians 3 where Paul points out the contrast leaving no room at all for a parallel or typological interpretation of Christ in the light of Mosaic traditions. In this respect it is significant that in the two places (1 Corinthians 10, and 2 Corinthians 3) where Paul does make use of Mosaic traditions, the context is one which sees Paul 'correcting' mistaken views concerning the Christian sacraments, and the Christian covenant respectively.

In the letter to the Romans, Paul's references to Moses are either in connection with the Jewish scriptures (e.g. 9:15, 10:5), or as a point in history (5:14). Significantly, in Romans 5:20 Paul merely says 'the law came ... ', and there is no mention of the figure or importance of Moses in mediating the law.

In Galatians, as in Romans, Paul's attention is devoted to giving a positive portrayal of Abraham, and the Mosaic traditions which were so important in the apologetic presentation of Judaism in the Greek world, are treated only negatively in connection with

the Jewish law. This is not really surprising as in Galatians Paul is defending his interpretation of a law-free Christian Gospel against a Judaising position which urged circumcision and observance of the Jewish law, and probably appealed to Mosaic traditions in support of their position. In Galatians 3:15ff Paul argues that the Mosaic covenant and its legal obligations, 'does not annul so as to make the promise of no effect'; rather, that as the promise is now fulfilled in Christ, the law is superseded.

In Romans and Galatians, Paul does not make any apologetic use of the figure of Moses; the positive portrayal of an Old Testament character is reserved for Abraham. The reason for this is found in Paul's negative view of the Jewish law in relation to the Christian faith. Moses was so tightly associated with the Jewish law as Israel's law giver, that it would have been impossible to use Moses in any positive way and at the same time play down the significance of the law. This does not mean that Paul cannot make use of the Exodus imagery and the Biblical account of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, in fact to omit any reference to these major Jewish traditions would be to play into the hands of Judaising opponents who appealed to them. In 1 and 2 Corinthians, therefore, we see Paul using Mosaic traditions and motifs but in a thoroughly negative way; effectively countering positive appeal that could be made to the figure of Moses in support of a Judaising position.

### 1 Corinthians

In 1 Corinthians Paul writes to a church which is upset by

quarrels and dis<sup>s</sup>ension within it. Paul's letter is a deliberation on certain questions and problems that have arisen there. He aims to unite the Corinthian community in their approach to hotly debated questions such as the attitude they should take concerning certain marriage customs and immorality, civil law proceedings, and the eating of idol meat. He also directs the proper and equal evaluation of the different 'gifts' within the community and the correct understanding of the Christian sacraments.

It is in connection with establishing the proper understanding of the Lord's supper and the related question of what the Christian attitude to 'meat sacrificed to idols' should be, that Paul makes use of Mosaic traditions concerning the wandering in the wilderness: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.

### 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Before considering this passage itself, it is important to set it in its context in 1 Corinthians, chapters 1-10, for this section has been subject to literary criticism leading ultimately to partition theories with respect to 1 Corinthians. Chapter 8 deals with the question of 'meat sacrificed to idols'; chapter 9 with the 'rights' of an apostle; chapter 10:1-22 gives a scriptural illustration of the dangers of falling into adultery; and chapter 10:23-11:1 links up with the topic of chapter 8. Two theories are interwoven by Paul; that of the idea of Christian freedom and its place in the community, and that of the sacrament and its meaning. In this section (Chapters 8-10) Paul defends his own authority and qualifications in giving advice and direction

on these questions, and he also commends and argues his own understanding of the implications involved, adding a cogent warning in 1 Corinthians 10:1ff of possible results if his direction is not heeded by the Corinthians.

Paul deals with the Corinthians' 'enthusiastic' understanding of their Christian position. In these chapters, Paul's advice and direction in this respect are argued and defended, wider implications are drawn out, and support is supplied by way of warning against possible consequences; then Paul reasserts his advice and exhorts the Corinthians to follow it.

In the section which begins at 8:1, the question raised by the problem of idol meat is shown by Paul to have wider implications which the Corinthians must realise; consequently the discussion of Christian freedom and obligations, and the proper understanding of the sacraments is entailed. It is in this context in 1 Corinthian 10:1-13 that Paul uses Old Testament wilderness traditions in a midrashic way to warn the Corinthians against falling into idolatry through their misunderstanding and misuse of the Lord's supper.

Andrew J. Bandstra in his article 'Interpretation in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11', points out that he does not propose 'to attempt to interpret the passage as much as to call attention to the interpretation present in the passage'. He begins by placing 1 Cor. 10:1-11 in its context which he calls an 'ethical' one because of its attachment to the exhortation to exercise self-control (9:24-27), and its leading into the admonition expressed in 10:12. Bandstra states that 'Paul apparently is contending



against a hellenistic-magical view of the sacraments present in Corinth, according to which participation in the sacraments was seen as a guarantee of eternal salvation. In contrast to this false sacramental concept, Paul proclaims his view that the gift of God is never to be separated from man's response of faith ..... To make this point, Paul draws a comparison between certain events of Israel's history and the current situation of the Corinthians." <sup>2</sup>

Although Paul actually used the term 'τύκος' in this passage, this cannot be understood in a technical sense. Paul does not say the Corinthians will perish like the Israelites, the 'types' here indicate the possibility if the Corinthians do not mend their ways. The Old Testament imagery is employed as a warning and Paul's use of 'τύκος' would heighten the effect of the warning.

H. Conzelmann calls 10:1-10 'a self contained, scribal discourse on passages from the Biblical Exodus narrative', and he adds, 'the style of Paul's 'typological' exposition shows that the biblical material is assumed to be known: 'the cloud' etc. The new element which Paul has to offer is the interpretation introduced by οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν - I would not have you ignorant' (v.1)', <sup>3</sup> and as Professor Barrett comments, Paul 'is in fact reminding them of what they should have known and were in danger of forgetting'. <sup>4</sup>

There are elements within 1 Cor. 10:1-10 that have led some commentators to argue that there lies behind the passage some Jewish Midrashic Material. This is particularly so in the case of verses 3 and 4, but also with regard to verse 1 - '... our

fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea'.

Professor Barrett notes a possible relation with rabbinic traditions. He cites passages where the rabbis had the Israelites completely surrounded by cloud by postulating the existence of more than one cloud, hence they could be said to be 'under' a cloud. He also gives an account of a rabbinic parallel to Paul's statement that the Israelites passed 'through' the sea, for he notes that the rabbis give a picture of a tunnel 'through' which the Israelites crossed the sea. Such rabbinic parallels lead Professor Barrett to the conclusion that some parts of the midrashic material in 1 Cor. 10:1-10 have a 'Jewish origin'.<sup>5</sup>

The reference to the 'cloud' and 'sea' in 1 Cor. 10:2 are explained by Bandstra as being expressions of the two elemental ordeals, fire and water. He explains that the cloud is identified in the Old Testament with fire and served to shelter, guide and protect Israel,<sup>6</sup> and the sea was the means whereby Israel went through the water ordeal. Bandstra concludes that 'Paul means that in their passage under the cloud and through the sea, God brought them into an ordeal by these elements, through which he declared them accepted as the chosen people'.<sup>7</sup>

The question whether Paul is presenting Jewish midrashic material and adding Christian interpretation is raised again in verse 2 when Paul says, "All were baptised into Moses....", as it has been suggested that Paul is referring to a Jewish tradition of understanding the Exodus as a baptism.<sup>8</sup>

R. Longnecker argues that judging from Paul's rather abrupt

introduction of this episode into the argument as though it were self-evident, 'Paul is developing in Christian fashion, a Jewish tradition that the legitimacy of proselyte baptism is defensible in terms of understanding the Exodus as involving a baptism'.<sup>9</sup>

Whether or not there is such a Jewish tradition in Paul's mind, Paul was most probably responsible for the phrase 'into Moses' which cannot be explained from Jewish sources. The phrase may be accounted for by the Christian baptismal formula 'into Christ'. Bandstra notes that 'Paul interprets the Exodus event in the light of what has happened in Christ ... Behind this interpretation lies the conviction that in the historical Christ event, the pattern of God's historical dealings with Israel in the Exodus is brought to fulfilment and finds its focal point'.<sup>10</sup> The reference to baptism in 1 Cor. 10:2 should not be taken to hold any profound understanding of Christian baptism, for as Conzelmann comments, 'His thought moves back to the Old Testament from the present datum, baptism, and certainly does not vice versa derive and interpret baptism from the Old Testament'.<sup>11</sup> The reference made to baptism by Paul is a parallel that he contrives to draw in order to strengthen his warning illustration to the Corinthians not to rely too heavily on the power of the sacraments by referring them to the example of the wilderness events.

The allusion to Israel's spiritual food and drink, and the mention of the rock identified with Christ in verses 3-4, have led scholars to seek a possible Jewish midrashic background for Paul's words. It is generally agreed that in verse 3 where he

uses the expression 'spiritual food and drink' Paul is making a covert reference to the Lord's Supper, and that this phrase would have been thus understood by the Corinthians. The manna and water are distinguished from ordinary food and drink in that they are gifts of God. Conzelmann concludes that 'Paul is thinking not of a real Old Testament sacrament, but of a prefiguration. The form of expression, 'spiritual food' and 'spiritual drink' is apparently assumed to be familiar. It expresses a realistic concept of the sacrament'.<sup>12</sup>

The allusive correspondence proposed between what happened to Israel in the desert and the Lord's supper is made more explicit in verse 4 where Paul adds, "For they were drinking from the spiritual rock which followed them and the rock was Christ". This reference to the rock 'that followed' the Israelites in the desert led E. E. Ellis and others to postulate that Paul has in mind here, a rabbinic legend based on Numbers 21:17. Ellis points to what he calls 'a cumulative legend in rabbinic literature to which the Pauline phrase has been related in one degree or another', and he reconstructs a full account of this legend from various disparate elements of different strata of the tradition.<sup>13</sup> According to this tradition, the rock (either a rock-shaped well, or a stream from the rock) accompanied the Israelites through the desert. Ellis himself admits that it is difficult to determine the precise character of the legend in the time of Paul, but he says that the abundance of rabbinic references to it, points to the early existence of the legend in some form, and suggests that at least the outline of the later complex strands of the tradition were known to Paul.<sup>14</sup>

Bandstra offers an alternative background to Paul's reference to the rock. He argues that 1 Cor. 10:3ff does not rest on Numbers 21:17, and the legend built on that passage as expounded by E. E. Ellis. Rather, he suggests its background is to be sought in Deuteronomy 32 with its references to the Lord being 'the rock', the Lord providing for His people in the wilderness by means of a 'flinty rock'. Commenting on 1 Cor. 10:3ff, Bandstra asks how the fact that the Israelites were drinking from the spiritual rock that accompanied them could supply the ground for calling the Israelites' food spiritual as well as their drink. Bandstra then quotes passages from Philo, where Philo's exegesis arrives at the conclusion that the rock was Israel's source of both food and drink.<sup>16</sup> It is Bandstra's contention that Paul's expression in 1 Cor. 10:3-4 can best be accounted for if it is seen against a tradition similar to that of Philo's.<sup>17</sup>

This explanation of the background to 1 Cor. 10:3-4 seems plausible, but it is not without drawbacks. For example, where does the notion of the 'following' rock, which is not mentioned by Philo, come from? The legend of the following rock or stream constructed by E. E. Ellis cannot be discounted altogether. The 'best of both worlds' is achieved by Longnecker who writes, 'perhaps some conflation of Numbers 21:17 and Deuteronomy 32:1ff had already occurred in early Pharisaic circles'.<sup>18</sup>

The identification of the rock with Christ extends the correspondance between the events in the wilderness and the Lord's Supper. An explanation of how Paul arrives at this identification refers

to Philo's identification of the rock with wisdom, 'By adapting these identifications Paul interprets Christ in terms of the wisdom of Hellenistic Judaism.' <sup>19</sup>

Such Hellenistic-Jewish traditions may certainly have helped Paul to make the identification without raising doubts about the exegesis. It may be significant that in Romans 9:33 Paul identifies Christ and rock, there the 'rock of offence'; and it may simply be that some Christian use of a rock motif may lie behind Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 10:4.

Whatever the background to 1 Cor. 10:4b, the identification of the rock with Christ has the desired effect of completing the correspondence Paul draws between the situation of the Israelites and that of the Corinthians with regard to their understanding of the Lord's Supper - "The identification of the rock with Christ is a Christian adaptation of the midrash ... Christ is as much the source of the spiritual food and drink of the Israelites, as he is the one present in the Lord's Supper at Corinth". <sup>20</sup>

1 Cor. 10:1-4 has drawn the parallel between the wilderness events and the situation in Corinth. Verses 1-4 contend that the Israelites received, in effect, baptism and spiritual food and drink. Professor Barrett sums up the position Paul has presented so far, thus: "Israel, then, in past ages was supplied by God with visible agencies which conveyed to them the benefits of Christ and the spirit, just as the church had its visible water, bread and wine, and its analogous sacraments." <sup>21</sup>

1 Cor. 10, verse 5ff Paul proceeds to make the point that all this has built up to. He points out that 'Israel's privilege did

not guarantee Israel's moral or religious security', <sup>22</sup> and the fate of many of them should act as a warning to the Corinthians not to rely merely on the partaking of the sacraments to ensure their salvation, while still 'lusting after evil things' (v.6).

As Conzelmann notes, 'The application to the 'strong' and their combination of pneumatism and sacramentalism is obvious'. <sup>23</sup>

The correspondence between the situation in the wilderness and that in Corinth is intended by Paul to be taken further in his description of the sort of sins the Israelites fell into (v.7ff); these are paralleled by the disorders and mistaken tendencies he was countering in his directions to the Corinthian community. The allusions to themes (in v.7-10) taken from the wilderness traditions concern mistakes made by the Israelites, and the subsequent warnings to the Corinthians build up the correspondences between the two situations further.

Warning against idolatry, immorality, testing the Lord, and 'grumbling', <sup>24</sup> Paul effectively inveighs against the faults he sees the Corinthians falling into. All this serves to heighten the effectiveness of the message delivered by Paul in v.11-13. He explains that the correspondences he has drawn were not arbitrary or accidental, but that this, 'was written down as a warning to us', and in this way he effectively uses a part of biblical history tradition as an illustration in support of his deliberations concerning the Corinthian community.

In chapter 10 v.14ff Paul underlines what he has argued so far concerning the Corinthians' mistaken view of the sacraments. He advises them to avoid falling into the sin of idolatry by having a proper understanding of the Lord's Supper and its exclusiveness

(see v.19-20).

In presenting the Lord's Supper Paul refers to the prophecy of Jeremiah (31:31-4), and this is significant in this context; also in 11:25 Paul quotes: "This cup is new covenant in my blood". The wording is different from that in Matthew and Mark <sup>25</sup>, where the background Old Testament passages are Exodus 24:8 as well as Jeremiah 31:31-4. Paul has the Jeremiah prophecy in mind when speaking of the Lord's Supper, and he explicitly states that the supper is symbolic of the new covenant. This is consistent with Paul's ideas concerning the Mosaic covenant (Galatians 3:21ff), and also with the use Paul makes of the prophecy from Jeremiah in 2 Cor. 3

In 1 Corinthians, Paul does not use Moses as an apologetic tool, nor does he even see him as an individual of potential apologetic use. Rather, Paul uses the wilderness traditions in a very negative way; those conditions and ideas were to be avoided, not copied. The whole tendency is to play down the significance of Moses, even though at first sight the analogy of baptism 'into' Moses and Christian baptism seem to place Moses and Christ on the same plane. This is not Paul's intention, however, he merely wished to show some point of contact between the situation in Corinth and that in the wilderness stories so that he can then go on and make an effective warning using the Israelite abuse of the position as an example.

### 2 Corinthians

The use of Moses and wilderness imagery in 2 Corinthians shows the same 'playing down' of these traditions by Paul. In 2 Corinthians, Chapter 3 Paul takes the Judaizing opponents' use



of Moses and turns their arguments around; he is using the basis of their arguments to prove the opposite conclusion.

2 Corinthians, Chapters 1-9 form the narrative section of the defence, stating the 'facts' of the case as Paul sees them, relating the circumstances which have led up to the position which is reflected in Chapters 10-13. These past circumstances include an incident which occurred while Paul was visiting Corinth for the second time, and which he took as a personal affront, and which he also saw as a danger to the church; so he wrote a letter to Corinth after this visit. The letter opposed the teaching of the one who had been against him while he was there; it acclaimed the superiority of the Gospel he preached and thereby also, the superiority of his apostolic authority. This letter, which is restated in Chapters 2:14 - 7:4, seemed to have achieved its object at first, the opponent being punished and the church reunited behind Paul. But the warnings against Judaizing tendencies and false prophets from outside were not heeded by the Corinthians for long, and the problem flared up again to become a very serious threat to Paul's apostolic status and especially his authority as 'father' of the Corinthian church.

The use made of Mosaic traditions in chapter 3 should be considered in the context of opposition to Judaizing claims following a dispute with an opponent in Corinth; a dispute which had led to the questioning of Paul's authority and integrity. Paul is faced with a rival apostolic claim in Corinth, opponents who had produced written authentication of their claim (3:1ff). In 2:17ff Paul described his own preaching in contrast to that of the rivals in Corinth, and in chapter 3 he continues to deal with the rival claims to apostleship.

2 Corinthians 3

The technical designation of letters of recommendation in v.1 shows that Paul is referring to the epistolary form which was common in the ancient world and is evidenced within the New Testament itself.<sup>26</sup> Use must have been made of such letters by his rivals in Corinth. In contrast to this, Paul claims that the Corinthians themselves are his recommendation to the world. He denies the value of letters 'of men' as presented by his rivals (c.f. Gal.1). He has the figurative letter of the Corinthian church, written by Christ, and recommending him to all men as an authorised minister of the Gospel of God. In v.36ff the figure is extended, hinting at the theme to come, the contrast between the old and the new - the Jeremiah prophecy fulfilled in Christ and the abrogation of the Jewish law. As Baird<sup>27</sup> comments, 'Paul attempted to expand his metaphor through a contrast of the letter of recommendation with ordinary epistles in regard to writing materials, but then Old Testament reminiscences and anticipation of material which he was to write later in the chapter led him to an entirely new figure - the new covenant.'

The prophecy of the new covenant (Jeremiah 31) lies behind verse 6, and Paul explicitly states the contrast he draws between old and new; the 'old' represented by the 'letter' leads to death, while the new is 'represented by the 'spirit' leads to life. In verses 7-12 Paul expounds the distinction further by contrasting his ministry with that of Moses. The contrast is illustrated in a midrashic interpretation of the Old Testament passage Exodus 34:28-35. Professor Barrett writes that, 'it seems that Paul's exegesis is not based on traditional Jewish themes (apart from

the Old Testament account of Moses's shining face), but is a new Christian interpretation; there is no reason to think of it as anything but his own work, produced with polemical intent against a Judaizing threat'.<sup>28</sup>

In his treatment of the Mosaic traditions and giving of the Law, Paul does not deny their importance, but claims that they belong to the past and that their significance for the present time is diminished by the very much greater significance of the new covenant.

Through a series of antitheses Paul draws out the implications of his claim to have mediated a new and better covenant. Dominating all the antitheses is the one between the two ministries of which they are the respective characteristics. Hickling makes the point: "Together with a clear inclination (especially manifest in Galatians) to condemn the old dispensation out of hand goes the awareness that God Himself had been acting through it. Thus, just as in Romans 7 the law is both the 'agent provocateur' leading men to sin, and yet in principle, 'holy and just and good', so the Mosaic mediation through which it was given, as described in 2 Cor. 3, is a ministry of condemnation and death, and yet one which did after all once enjoy the bestowal of divine glory".<sup>29</sup>

In chapter 3 verses 10-18 Paul takes up the narrative to Exodus 34:29-35 in particular relation to the sequence of events associated with the 'glory' of Moses. Paul points to the veil worn by Moses to cover the reflected radiance of his face, a covering which Judaism took to be a symbol of the greatness of Moses and the glory of the Mosaic legislation (Exodus 34:33). Paul ironically acknowledges that such a veil is still Israel's

possession, serving now as a blindfold of the eyes and heart to the greater glory of Christ.

Exodus gives no reason why Moses veils himself, but Paul's interpretation of this action of Moses is twofold. Firstly, it is a gesture of diffidence, in contrast to Paul's own *καρρησία*. To explain the jump in thought in verse 12 Van Unnik points to an Aramaic idiom as possibly lying behind it. He notes that a typical expression 'to uncover the face or head' is synonymous with *καρρησία*: "To 'cover the face' is a sign of shame and mourning", to 'uncover the head' means confidence and freedom ... The unveiling of the head or face' comprises openness, confidence and boldness. How different was the behaviour of Moses, what he did was in the symbolic language of Paul's time a sign of shame and bondage".<sup>30</sup>

The thought contained in verse 12 is explained by Professor Barrett thus: "Moses did not act towards the children of Israel with the same complete frankness that Paul employed towards the Corinthians (for Paul's insistence on this cf. 1:18ff; VI.11ff). In order to make this point Paul reads into the Exodus narrative more than is explicitly stated there".<sup>31</sup>

The second reason Paul gives for Moses' veiling his face was that the 'children of Israel might not gaze on the end of that which was being abolished'. At first sight this seems to mean that the veil concealed the fading glory of Moses so that he would not be considered as of only temporary significance. But as Professor Barrett points out; "Paul is not concerned with (and almost certainly did not intend) a moral indictment of Moses. 'That which was being abolished' (*τοῦ καταργουμένου* - neuter - conceivably

masculine, but it would be hard to make sense of this) is not the glory (δόξα, feminine) of Moses's face; we must go back to the neuter participles of verses 10,11 and see here a reference to the old covenant, or dispensation as a whole, the religious framework of law under which Israel was constituted as a people. It was out of this that Moses's behaviour sprang, just as Paul's different behaviour was rooted in the different religious framework of the new covenant, which is based on the Gospel, not law (c.f. 1:19)".<sup>32</sup>

This explanation of verse 12 fits in well with what follows immediately in the continuing use made of the veil imagery for Paul goes on to say that the veil is still present hiding from the Jews, the fact that the old covenant has been superseded by Christ.

Paul's interpretation of the motives of Moses in veiling his face, do however, show a lack of concern on Paul's part to uphold the greatness and integrity of this Old Testament figure. His use of the veil imagery as applied to the reading of the Old Testament and Jewish use and interpretation of the law is an ingenious device to make the step in his argument from the past to the present, whereby the 'types' in the past are reproduced in the present, and the effective indictment is made against contemporary Judaism which had not recognised the significance of Christ.

In his indictment of the present, continuing Jewish unbelief, Paul in verse 14, refers to the 'old covenant' - the Sinai covenant and the law. He explains (verse 15) that when the law is read,

the 'veil' still remains for the Jews. The law contains the truth, but they do not perceive it; but the veil is removed before the Lord (v.16 - cf. Ex. 34:34) by the spirit (verse 17). Paul's argument has now come full circle; the spirit contrasted with the ink (3:3) and letter (3:6, 7, 8), replaces the written law and fulfils the Jeremiah prophecy of the new covenant of the law written in men's hearts.

In 2 Corinthians 3 Paul is countering the Judaisers' use of the figure of Moses in presenting their case. Paul deflates the significance and position of Moses by arguing that Moses was Minister to the 'old' covenant which is now superseded by the 'new' covenant of which he is Minister. Paul does not hesitate either to attribute somewhat questionable motives for Moses' veiling his face in comparison with his own pure, sincere motives in his 'boldness' towards the Corinthians.

Certainly Paul veers away from the way Philo and the rabbis exalted the position and glory of Moses. Paul minimises Moses's significance, and thereby modifies current Jewish and Hellenistic/Jewish (and perhaps also Christian/messianic) interpretation of the figure of Moses. He also introduces the very negative idea that the old covenant ministered to by Moses, was fading even at the time of Sinai.

Chapter 4. Notes - 'The Apologetic Use of the Figure of Moses'

(The Portrayal of Moses in Paul)

1. Andrew J. Bandstra - 'Interpretation in 1 Corinthians 10:1-11'  
Calvin Theol. Journ. 6. 1971. Pages 5-21
2. Andrew J. Bandstra. op.cit. Page 6
3. H. Conzelmann - 'A Commentary on Corinthians'  
Hermeneia. Fortress Press. 1975. Page 165
4. G. K. Barrett - 'The First Epistle to the Corinthians'  
A & C Black. 1971. Page 229
5. G. K. Barrett - 'From First Adam to Last'. 1962. Page 48
6. Ex.13:21ff; 14:9ff; Ps.105:39; Wis. of Sol. 10:17; 19:7
7. Andrew J. Bandstra op.cit. Page 9
8. 'Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period' ed. by R. Longenecker  
Eerdmans Publ. 1975. Pages 114ff
9. R. Longenecker. op.cit. Page 118
10. Andrew J. Bandstra. op.cit. Page 7
11. H. Conzelmann. op.cit. Page 166
12. H. Conzelmann op.cit. Page 166
13. E. E. Ellis - 'Paul's Use of the Old Testament' Pages 66-68
14. E. E. Ellis - op.cit. Page 68
15. Andrew J Bandstra op.cit. Page 12
16. Bandstra points to Philo's speculation concerning the rock. Philo identified the rock in the wilderness as the Wisdom of God (Allegorical Interpretation II. 86), and the well of Numbers 21:16-18 as 'Wisdom' ('on Drunkenness' 112f, 'on Dreams' 270ff). Philo also asserts that Moses uses a synonym for rock and calls it 'Manna' which Philo further identifies as the 'logos' of God. This identification of 'rock' and 'manna' in connection with God's word and wisdom is on the basis of Deut. 32:13. Thus Philo's exegesis arrives at the conclusion that the rock was Israel's source of both food and drink.
17. Andrew J. Bandstra op.cit. Page 13
18. R. Longenecker op.cit. Page 119

19. C. K. Barrett - 'The First Epistle to the Corinthians' 1971  
Page 223
20. Andrew J. Bandstra - op.cit. Page 14
21. C. K. Barrett - 'The First Epistle to Corinthians' op.cit.  
Page 223
22. C. K. Barrett - op.cit. Page 223
23. H. Conzelmann op.cit. Page 167.
24. 1 Cor. 10:7, 1 Cor. 10:8, 1 Cor 10:6, 1 Cor. 10:6 =  
Exodus 32:6, Numbers 1:9, Ps 78:18, Numbers 17:6 respectively.
25. Matthew 26:27ff, Mark 14:24ff.
26. New Testament examples of Recommendation include the letters from the Jerusalem High Priest authorising Paul as persecutor of Christians in Damascus (Acts 19:2), and a letter sent by the church at Ephesus to the Christians of Achaia recommending that they receive Apollos as an authorised leader of the church (Acts 18:27). Paul's letters contain material of recommendation (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10ff; 2 Cor. 8:16ff), and Philemon and Romans 16 appear to be examples of Letters of Recommendation.
27. William Baird - 'Letters of Recommendation : A study of 2 Cor. 3:1-3'  
J. B. L. 80 1961. pp 166 - 172
28. C. K. Barrett - op.cit. Page 115
29. C. J. A. Hickling - 'The Sequence of Thought in 2 Cor 3'  
N. T. S. 21 pp. 380-395 (Page 388)
30. W. G. Van Unnik - 'With Unveiled Face. 2 Cor 3:12-18'  
Nov. Test. VI 1963. Page 161
31. C. K. Barrett op.cit. Page 119
32. C. K. Barrett op.cit. Page 119



## Chapter 5

### The Form and Structure of the Pauline Letters

In chapter 1, I surveyed the classical rhetorical systems outlining the structure of the defence or deliberative discourse. In the following chapters I aim to show how Paul's letters can be analysed, exhibiting their underlying structure following the rhetorical guidelines of the 'Art of Persuasion'.

Paul's apologies were cast in the form of letters sent to the Christian communities, so it is important to understand the formal structure of the letter in the first century, to see how Paul uses the 'epistolary framework' in the composition of 'apologia'.

The form of the letter remained much the same through several centuries of the ancient world's civilization. There is no radical difference between the conventions exhibited by letters dated in the third century B.C., and those found in the third century A.D. letters. The important role which letter writing played as a developed and widely-practised technique of communication and literary expression is clearly reflected in the fact that epistolography was a common subject in the curriculum of formal education in the rhetorical schools. Letter-writing was not only taught for practical purposes of communication, but the form was also used as an exercise in composition. Paul Schubert<sup>1</sup> writes: "In the Hellenistic world letter writing in many varieties of form and function was a widely employed, highly developed, and indispensable means of actual communication and of literary expression, engaging and embracing all social classes and

institutions".

F. X. Exler <sup>2</sup>, in his work on epistolography in the ancient world, describes the letter as a 'written conversation', for in its simplest form it is essentially intimate, individual and personal, and as such, unrestricted by the conventions of other forms of literature. Exler argues that because of this, the letter form found favour with the Sophists for it offered them the opportunity for displaying learning, and it was through this that epistolography became a branch of literature. The 'literary letter', then, is defined by Exler, as an essay in the form of a real letter and destined for the world at large.

Exler identifies three types of 'literary letter': a real letter, in which the possibility of its becoming public has influenced the writing; a fictitious letter, in every respect of form a real letter, except that the addresse<sup>e</sup>s are the public; and a treatise, which has some external forms of a letter such as a salutation and signature, but as to content is in reality a didactic composition. <sup>3</sup>

Adolf Deissmann <sup>4</sup> pressed a distinction between the 'letter' and the 'epistle'; the letter being artless and unpremedia<sup>t</sup>ed, while the epistle was literary and artistic. William G. Doty in his article 'The Classification of epistolary literature' <sup>5</sup>, says that this diametrical opposition is too strict and may be misleading, but he goes on to explain why Deissmann had stressed it.

The first position which Deissmann had reacted against was that of dogmatism; he felt that Paul had been wrongly interpreted as a 'system-proud dogmatician'. Deissmann thought of Paul as writing 'religion' rather than 'theology' and he stressed the

occasional nature of Paul's letters as private and spontaneous. Secondly, Deissmann disagreed with the classical view that the New Testament language was poor Greek, so against this, Deissmann emphasised the artlessness, vitality and immediacy of the New Testament language. Thirdly, Deissmann combated the idea that the New Testament Canon should be treated as an entity and as formal literature. Again, therefore, he was led to emphasise the occasional nature of the Pauline letters, arguing that they were not intended for the public or for posterity; so that if these letters were treated as literary or theological material they were interpreted incorrectly.

W. Doty concludes that Deissmann's distinction between 'letter' and 'epistle' allowed the Pauline letters to speak with their original voice, and a positive outcome of it was the consideration given to each letter individually with attention directed toward the specific situation and relationship obtaining between writer and addressees.<sup>6</sup> Deissmann's treatment of the letters did guard against the dogmatic reading of Paul which aimed at a unified and rigid Pauline theology; but, on the other hand, it resulted in a too rigid distinction between 'letter' and 'epistle'. Doty maintains that the absolute distinction between letter and epistle should be dropped, and 'instead we should give specific letters a relative position somewhere in the spectrum of private, intimate letters, and open, public letters, taking their formal conventions and their content fully into account.'<sup>7</sup>

Paul used and adapted the Graeco-Roman letter form for his Christian purposes - apologetic and didactic - and his work

became a model for early Christian literature. Despite the seemingly private nature of Paul's letters, there are many scholars who would argue that in fact these letters were not just occasional, intimate communications; but that rather they were written for wide use in the Christian communities, and written by Paul in his conscious capacity as an official representative of the early church - as an apostle. A balance must of course be reached between treating Paul's letters as purely occasional, contextual writings; and as attempts to express his Christian understanding of life. Insofar as Paul was writing with the conscious authority of being Christ's representative, and to congregations as a whole, then his letters take on the form of official pronouncements; but on the other hand, the situation to which they are addressed should be kept firmly in the foreground if their content is to be understood.

Paul Schubert <sup>8</sup> says that it cannot be denied that much of the Pauline scholarship of the past was shackled by the chains of tradition, for, he goes on: 'there is basically very little difference of bias or objective between the work of Marcion, Augustine or Luther down to Barth or Loisy ..... they all share the basic but unwarranted assumption that Paul was essentially or primarily a theologian; that his system of theology was a marvel of logical consistency'. <sup>9</sup> Schubert continues saying that a correlate of this assumption is that a study of the form of the Pauline letters is a waste of time as far as understanding the letters is concerned. Certainly there is no ground for denying that Paul was the first great theologian of Christianity; but the

point is that Paul's theology emerges as the result of the study of his letters, that it cannot be made the basic assumption of that study.

Studying Paul, with a view to presenting him as an apologist for Christianity, combines both of the extreme approaches to Pauline study. The study of the form and function of the letter itself may serve to show Paul's letters have some characteristics of formally apologetic works, while the theology of Paul may be seen developing out of the need to expound and explain the Gospel in those situations which call either for a negative defensive stand or for a positive deliberative exposition of the Gospel.

Schubert points to 2 Corinthians 10:10 where the opponents of Paul have called his letters 'impressive and forceful', and he notes that these critics would gladly have derided Paul as a letter writer if they could have found grounds for doing so; therefore their favourable appraisal of the letters of Paul is all the more striking. Schubert therefore notes that 'we may value the quotation as the first qualitative judgement on the Pauline letters in recorded history.'<sup>10</sup>

The letter form, then, by the time Paul used it, was a well established and accepted means of private communication, and also exercised the wider function of a vehicle of teaching and persuasion. Paul made use of the letter form to communicate his teaching and views to his churches; and by letter, also, he was able to defend himself and his gospel against opponents.

John L. White<sup>11</sup> notes that form critical studies have enabled us

to identify such elements within the Pauline letter as paraenesis, opening thanksgiving, salutation and closing; and other traditional material (e.g. hymns, kerygmatic formulae, confessions, doxologies and benedictions). He goes on to say that study of other aspects of Paul's writing (e.g. on style, theology, argumentation), shows conclusively that Paul was not an 'undisciplined letter writer'.<sup>12</sup> This is certainly true; Paul's letters are very tightly structured as the following chapters will show, and they adhere to the formalised conventions of letter writing as follows:

### Structure of the Pauline Letter

Opening (sender, addressee, greeting)

Thanksgiving

Body

Paraenesis - Christian directions

Closing (formulaic benediction and greetings)

### The Letter Opening

The standard Greek letter opening 'x to x, Greetings!' followed by a formulaic expression of concern for the well being of the addressee, is elaborated and expanded by Paul to include self description and often mention of his co-workers. The description of the addressees is extended ..... to mention their special status as recipients of the gospel; and the designation of his own status as apostle serves to establish his authority at the head of the letter.

It has been said that the Pauline formula 'Grace and Peace ...' arose through a combination of the Jewish greeting 'עֲלֵינָךְ שָׁלוֹם' with the greeting 'χαίρειν' customary in Greek Letters which the

Christians changed to 'χαρις'. Alternatively, L. G. Champion<sup>13</sup> has suggested that in fact the whole phrase was formulated in the Christian worship and taken over by Paul from there.

### The Thanksgiving

When Paul includes the thanksgiving section at the beginning of his letters, he modifies the Hellenistic form by giving it a distinctive Christian flavouring, and using it as a lead into the subsequent composition.

### The Body of the Letter

The body of the letter contains the main message, and it is this part which is structured along the lines of apologetic composition (see the following chapters).

Possible openings of the body section have been noted by J. T. Sanders<sup>14</sup>, who pointed to the 'request' or 'appeal' formula as often opening the main part of the letter; or the 'disclosure' opening which counsels the addressees or informs them of something.

A discussion of the body section of the Pauline letter has been undertaken by John L. White<sup>15</sup>. Much of what he says is common sense, for example, when he identifies three basic parts of the common Greek Letter - body opening, middle, and closing. However, he does pin-point the transitional devices used by Paul, which he enumerates.<sup>16</sup>

Robert W. Funk<sup>17</sup> points to the sections of Paul's letters which he terms the 'travelogue' where the apostle writes of his intention

or hope to pay the congregation he addresses a personal visit.

Three media - the letter, the emissary, and Paul's personal presence, all convey his apostolic authority; as a section in the letter, the travelogue is one element by which Paul presents his apostolic <sup>o</sup>pwer to the congregation to add authority and dynamism to his words - the 'apostolic parousia.' Funk identifies certain passages which are specifically concerned with this 'apostolic parousia', and he takes Romans 15:14-33 as a model, it being the most elaborate and formally structured of the passages. <sup>18</sup>

Funk's argument is that Paul uses the letter as a substitute for his presence in the congregation he writes to, and this section of the letter clearly shows how through the letter and the emissary, his presence is carried and his authority made effective.

#### Paraenesis

Paul uses this section to give Christian ethical direction in general and summary terms; it may contain some pre-Pauline elements but Paul uses it to give ethical and moral direction in more general terms than found otherwise in a letter which deals with specific problems. David G. Bradley <sup>19</sup> says that paraenesis may be defined as 'exhortation to seek virtue and shun vice, and the giving of rules or directions for proper thought and action in daily living in a form which permits a wide applicability of the teachings.'

#### Letter Closing

Conventional closing formulae include a wish for the good health of the recipient, then a word of farewell. Paul is not bound to



these closing conventions, and he ends with a benediction or doxology; he may also include the method of writing, signature and closing greetings. <sup>20</sup>

The Pauline letters follow the rules of epistolography current at the time (opening, thanksgiving, closing etc); they are 'real' letters in the sense that they were written by Paul to specific communities. This does not mean that they could not also contain material and formal characteristics of other forms of literature such as apologetic features and structures such as those expanded in the rhetorical teaching of the time, especially where the situation which occasioned the letter requires a defensive stand on Paul's part.

Paul follows the epistolary convention in the composition of his letters, but where he does, on occasion, deviate from it, this deviation may be seen to be in line with the purpose of the particular letter. For example, the letter to the Galatians contains a forensic defence and a thanksgiving at the start would be inappropriate; similarly, the omission of a specific paraenetic section in 1 Corinthians is understandable, because the body and content of the letter as a whole serves this function. It is the main body section of the letters which presents the apologetic content, and this is fitted into the structure of the letter form. In the chapters that follow, it is argued that Paul, within the letter format, presents an apologetic for Christianity as he proclaimed it, and for his own apostolic status and authority.

Chapter 5. Notes - The form and structure of the Pauline Letters

1. Paul Schubert - Form and Function of the Pauline Letters  
Journal of Religion. 19. 1939 Pages 367ff
2. F. X. Exler - A study in Greek Epistolography : The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter. 1923. page 16
3. F. X. Exler - op.cit. Page 17
4. Adolf Deissmann - Light from the Ancient East - 1910  
" " Bible Studies - 1901
5. William G. Doty - The Classification of Epistolary Literature  
C. B. Q. 31. pp. 175ff
6. William G. Doty. op.cit. Page 189
7. William G. Doty. op.cit. Page 189
8. Paul Schubert. op.cit. pp. 367ff
9. Paul Schubert. op.cit. page 374
10. Paul Schubert. op.cit. Page 375
11. J. L. White - The Body of the Greek Letter  
S. B. L. Dissertation Series 2. 1972
12. J. L. White - op.cit. Page 44
13. L. G. Champion - Benedictions and Doxologies in the Epistles of Paul - 1934
14. J. T. Sanders - The Transition from opening epistolary thanksgiving to Body in the Pauline Corpus  
J. B. L. 81 - 1962. pp. 252-53, 258-62
15. J. L. White. op.cit
16. Examples include: disclosure formulae, imperative form, motivation expressions of reassurance, responsibility statements, grief or anxiety statements, grammatical constructions (e.g. conditional clauses, use of the vocative), request formulae, reproach expressions, joy expressions etc.
17. Robert W. Funk - The Apostolic Parousia - Form and Significance  
Studies for J. Knox, ed. W. R. Farmer
18. Passages identified by Funk: Rom. 15:16-33 (parallel 1:8f), Phil. 2:1f, 1 Cor. 4:14-21, 1 Thess. 2:17-3:13, Phil. 2:19-24, 1 Cor. 16:1-11, also 2 Cor. 8:16-23 and 9:1-5, Gal. 4:12-20.

Romans 15:14-33. This section Paul begins by stating why he writes (15:14-15a), then adds an elaboration of the basis of his apostolic relation to the recipients (15:15b-21), followed by the implementation of what Funk terms the 'apostolic parousia'. In this Paul says he has been hindered from coming (v.22), that he has longed to come (v.23), and he hopes that he will now see them soon (v.24b). In 15:25-9 he announces the definite prospect of a visit, and finally Paul anticipates that his presence among them will bring some benefit to him (v.32b).

19. David Bradley - The Topos as a form in the Pauline Paraenesis  
J. B. L. 72 - 1958  
and: James E. Crouch - The Origin and Intention of the  
Colossian Haustafel
20. L. G. Champion op.cit.

Chapter 6Paul's Letter to The Romans

The letter to the Romans was written at the close of Paul's 'Ephesian ministry' of 'collection period', just before he was due to travel to Rome to deliver the collection. The authenticity and homogeneity of Romans 1-15 are not open to serious doubt, attempts such as that of R. M. Hawkins<sup>1</sup> to see many interpolations in the text of Romans has found little support, and Kinoshita's<sup>2</sup> thesis of two works combined in Romans really lacks any sound basis.

On the other hand, of some serious doubts is whether our chapter 16 of Romans was originally part of the letter sent by Paul to Rome, and also whether the doxology of 16:25ff is even of Pauline authorship. There are striking variations in the manuscript traditions concerning the ending of Romans<sup>3</sup>, a puzzle of the location of the people addressed in Chapter 16, and suspicions of some Marcionite influence in the final doxology.

Marcion's text of Romans lacked chapters 15 and 16, having the doxology of 16:25ff following 14:23; and in other textual traditions the doxology comes in varying positions, at the end of Chapter 15 or the end of chapter 16. The most likely explanation, and one that is supported by many<sup>4</sup> is that 16:25-27 is a non-Pauline conclusion for the shorter text which originated from Marcion<sup>5</sup>; as Cranfield sums up<sup>6</sup>:

"The doxology, whatever its origin, was probably added in the first place to the text of Romans which ended with 14:23, because it was felt to need some sort of conclusion

to round it off." (p.8).

T. W. Manson argued <sup>7</sup> that Paul sent out what we know as Romans in two forms; our chapter 1-15 to Rome and a copy of these chapters together with chapter 16 to Ephesus. Professor Manson points to the textual evidence which omits the references to Rome in 1:1-17; he postulates that the problems of address in both Romans and Ephesians stem from the fact that it was in these two centres that Marcion received two great and humiliating rebuffs, and so in his canon Marcion saw to it that the Romans and Ephesians lost status as recipients of a letter from the apostle. Manson himself realises that this is no more than conjecture, but he adds that in view of the fact that so many clues lead back to Marcion, it may be worthwhile keeping this conjecture in mind.

In discussing the final doxology Professor Manson notes that it is widely held that this doxology originated in Marcionite circles. He discussed fully the textual variations concerning the position of the doxology, and concludes that in the second half of the second century the document was circulating in three forms: the Marcionite one that had no reference to Rome and which ended at 14:23; the Roman one which ended at 15:33; and the full text of sixteen chapters which was in circulation in Egypt and known to Clement of Alexandria. Manson postulates that Marcion knew the Roman text which he shortened, while the full text of Romans 1-16 was a letter to Ephesus. A further reason for seeing Romans 16 as sent to Ephesus is the large number of greetings to Paul's friends, since it is unlikely that he knew so many in Rome, a church he had neither founded nor visited. Furthermore, some in the list are otherwise associated with Asia and Ephesus. Manson

also says that the exhortation in Chapter 16:17-20 reads oddly if it is taken as addressed to a church to which Paul was a stranger, but suits a community in which he had lived and worked for some time. It is Professor Manson's conclusion that we must suppose that Paul prepared a letter (Romans 1.15) and sent it to Rome. At the same time a copy was prepared to be sent to Ephesus, and Chapter 16 was added as an introduction of Phœbe, who may be regarded as the bearer of the letter to Ephesus.

These arguments of Manson's have been widely discussed and in many instances accepted at least in part. But as C. E. B. Cranfield <sup>8</sup> notes (page 9), 'these arguments are not as strong as on first sight they appear to be', and he points out that Paul in fact seems to have refrained from sending greetings to individuals in churches which he knew (none in 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians), but he does include them in Romans, probably because this seemed a good way of establishing contact, one of the explicit aims of the letter to Rome.

Similarly, Manson's arguments can be contested when he claims Paul would not have so many friends in Rome, for the greetings do not presuppose friendship in all the cases. Kümmel <sup>9</sup> notes that in fact only nine out of the twenty six named need to be assumed to have migrated from the East to Rome. Furthermore, the allusion to Epænetus as the first convert in Asia would be far more understandable in a letter to Rome, than in one to Ephesus where this would already be well known. The likelihood that some of those named by Paul would have <sup>Moved</sup> to the capital from the Eastern part of the Empire is quite good, especially in the case of Prisca

and Aquila who came from Rome to start with (cf. Acts 18, Cor. 16:19); and Krümmel suggests that the lifting of Claudius' ban on Jews living in Rome after his death in AD54, as a reason for a return to the capital (see below), should not be dismissed out of hand.

E. J. Goodspeed<sup>10</sup> accepts the hypothesis of Manson's that Romans Chapter 16 was originally addressed to Ephesus, but he suggests that it was a separate letter altogether which only later became attached to the rest of Romans. Goodspeed accepts that the character and content point towards Ephesus as the destination of our Romans Chapter 16, especially noting Paul's large acquaintance with those in the church to which Phoebe is going. He postulates that what we know as Chapter 16 of the letter to Rome was in fact originally a letter of introduction for one Phoebe and addressed to the church at Ephesus which Paul knew well.

Goodspeed shows that as ancient letters of introduction go, Romans 16 is quite a long one, and that the long list of names is an essential part of any such communication. He argues that the loss of its opening salutation is natural enough in the light of the treatment that the Corinthian letters seem to have received where more than one have been combined. Goodspeed's further explanation of how this short letter of introduction for Phoebe which was addressed to Ephesus came to be attached to the Roman letter rests on his own thesis which pin-pointed Ephesus as the first centre of a collection of the Pauline letters, our letter to the Ephesians being encyclical and an introduction to the Pauline collection. Goodspeed says that the letter of introduction for Phoebe was kept at Ephesus but it was not sufficient to represent Paul's communication with Ephesus, so when the letters of Paul were collected the editor of them wrote our Ephesian letter, but preserved the short introductory note by joining it

to the Roman letter.

This is the weakness of Goodspeed's argument, for such reasons as he gives for the joining of Chapter 16 to the rest of Romans when it was originally sent to Ephesus, are pure conjecture, and are founded on grounds that are not altogether proven, namely that Paul's letters were first collected at Ephesus. On the other hand, the notion that Chapter 16 could stand independently and contains the characteristics of an ancient letter of introduction is most interesting, and is in fact taken up by J. I. H. MacDonald in his article 'Was Romans 16 a separate Letter?' <sup>11</sup>

Mac Donald begins by citing (p.369) the now famous comment of Hans Lietzmann ('an die Romer'. 1906 p.76) that 'A letter consisting almost entirely of greetings, as Chapter 16:1-23 would be if it were an independent letter, may be intelligible in the age of the picture postcard; for any earlier period it is a monstrosity.' MacDonald challenges this by referring to literary evidence from the Graeco-Roman world which he claims parallels Romans Chapter 16. He quotes two examples from Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East* as illustrations of letters in which a list of greetings form a significant part: <sup>12</sup> and he then adds an example of his own, a third century letter of Dius to his Father. <sup>13</sup>

MacDonald points out that in this short letter, the greetings occupy almost 63% of the entire letter; by comparison in Romans 16 a longer letter, the greetings occupy about 64% of the total content, and therefore MacDonald concludes (p.371) that 'Even shorter letters in the Graeco-Roman world could contain greetings



in practically the same proportions'. This leads him to argue that to regard Romans 16 as merely a list of greetings is to misrepresent it, and that in fact Romans 16:1-23, taken as an independent unit, is primarily a letter of recommendation (ἐπιστολὴ συντακτική) <sup>14</sup>. MacDonald concludes that letters of recommendation represented a current practice in Paul's time (2 Cor. 3:1, cf. 1 Cor. 16:3) and also among later generations of Christians (e.g. Oxyr. Pap. no. 1162 - fourth century letter of Leon), and that 'The resemblance of Romans 16:1-23 to a short letter of Graeco-Roman times is sufficiently strong to refute those commentators who would rule out the possibility of its independent existence on 'a priori grounds' (p.372).

That Romans 16 may function as a letter of introduction seems convincing, although attempts to separate it from Romans 1-15 break down on the question why Chapter 16 should have been joined to a letter to Rome if it had originally been an independent letter addressed to Ephesus (Goodspeed); while to reduce Romans to being a circular is to destroy its distinctive character and purpose (see below), which is the net effect of T. W. Manson's thesis. Furthermore, as we have seen the arguments for seeing Ephesus as the destination of Romans 16 are not finally convincing. It seems more likely that Romans 1-16 should be considered as a unity addressed to Rome, <sup>15</sup> and the lengthy list of greetings in Chapter 16 explained as Paul's exploitation of any personal contact he could find with the Roman community, or knowledge of its members, <sup>16</sup> both to serve his aim of establishing a connection with Rome, and as an essential part of the introductory letter

type which he has used to commend Phoebe.

It will be suggested (see below) that Romans Chapter 16:1-16 is a digression included in the section of the letter which functions as the epistolary ending or postscript to the structured deliberation sent by Paul to Rome. It is a note of introduction for Phoebe as MacDonald has said, and Paul sends his greetings to those he either knows or knows of, in Rome, following the custom of introductory letters.

One of Manson's reasons for seeing Chapter 16 as directed to Ephesus was the sharpness of the warning in 16:17-20, for he claims that it would be out of place in a letter to a church that Paul does not know personally. However, if one takes Manson's own notion that in writing Romans Paul has the recent controversy in Corinth very much in mind, and add to this what we know from the Corinthian letters of the use, or rather misuse, made there of 'letters of recommendation' (2 Cor. 3:1, 11:5), then it is only a further logical step to postulate that having just supplied Phoebe with a similar sort of letter of introduction, Paul's vehement warning in 16:17-20 is perfectly understandable. In Corinth Paul's apostolic position and his teaching had been threatened by those he calls 'false apostles' who, it seems, carried authentic introductory letters probably originating from some faction of the Jerusalem church hierarchy (2 Cor. 11:5). These 'Judaisers' used these letters in order to establish their authoritative backing, gain a foothold and a hearing to preach 'another gospel' in the Pauline churches. In view of the approaching difficulties which Paul envisages for his forthcoming visit to

Jerusalem (Romans 15:30-33), a similar situation could well recur; the rejection of the collection by the Jerusalem church and disagreement there could spark a fresh attempt to disparage Paul and his gospel. Paul therefore delivers an uncompromising warning against such an eventuality, and exhorts his readers not to listen to anyone who preached different doctrines from those they already subscribed to. The doctrines he warns against that cause division and disharmony are those he has encountered before, as taught by 'false apostles' whom he had known to carry letters of recommendation.

Romans 16:17-20 echoes earlier disputes met by Paul, and especially the bitter words of 2 Corinthians 10-13. In Corinth his opponents had created division by preaching a 'different gospel' (2 Cor. 11:4 - compare Rom. 16:17), they had preached 'another Jesus' and a 'different spirit' (2 Cor. 11:4a - compare Rom. 16:18 'for such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ'), their intention was to deceive (2 Cor. 11:14ff, (n.b. Galatians 6:12ff) - compare Rom. 16:18 'by praise and speaking kindly they deceive ... '). The whole tone of Rom. 16:17-20 reflects that of 2 Cor. 10-13 (e.g. the idea of the guile and craftiness of the false teachers envisaged, the notion of obedience as a catch-word (2 Cor. 10:5b, 6; cf. Rom. 16:19), and the use of the concepts of deception, simplicity, Satan (2 Cor. 11:3ff; 11:13ff cf. Rom. 16:20)). Accordingly the warning which reflects on this past and bitter controversy is sharp and vehement; it was prompted by the context, they use of an introductory letter, a device that had been used to advantage by unscrupulous opponents of Paul's on a previous occasion, and might be used again if agreement was not reached in

Jerusalem and the legitimacy of the inclusion of Gentiles to the people of God not finally established (i.e. without the legalistic and nationalistic trappings of the judaising version of the gospel).

The immediate aim of the letter to the Romans is stated by Paul in Chapter 1:8-16a and Chapter 15:14-33; he had completed his missionary work in the east, and after travelling to Jerusalem with the collection, he proposes to visit Rome, and from there to extend his work in the west to Spain. This is not an adequate explanation for such a letter as Romans, and in the history of scholarship concerning the epistle very many interpretations have been offered of the aim and purpose of Romans. The question that must be considered in this respect, is whether Paul simply felt that to give a balanced and carefully reasoned account of the Gospel he preached was the best way to introduce himself to a church he didn't found and where he was not known personally; or whether there were ulterior concerns behind the writing of the letter to Rome, perhaps to dispel misunderstanding or misrepresentation of his gospel or of himself, or perhaps to mediate in a controversy within the Roman church itself between Jewish and Gentile Christians?

It is a view adhered to now by most scholars, although widely differing views are offered in further explanation, that is summarised by Kümmel<sup>17</sup> (p.312) when he says that 'only the external occasion and immediate aim of the letter are accounted for by the announcement of his visit, by the clarification of his objectives, and by the enlisting of the understanding and help of the Christians in Rome for the missionary goals in the west. The broad theological discussion and debate within Judaism that pervades the letter must have other, deeper grounds.'

In the introduction to their commentary on Romans, Sanday and Headlam<sup>18</sup> blend together the main streams of thought up to their time concerning the underlying purpose in the composition of Romans. They combine what they term the 'historical' argument with the 'doctrinal' one through a third element, the personal experience of the apostle. They point to the early theory of F. C. Baur which was 'historical' when he argued from analogy of the other Pauline epistles that Romans was written with deliberate reference to the circumstances of the Roman church. Sanday and Headlam added that Paul's knowledge of the situation in the Roman church came from his contact with Aquila and Prisca; and that if the argument was addressed now to Gentiles, now to Jews, if there are glimpses of the parties in the church, of the strong and weak, and if there is a hint of threatening unsettlement (16:17-20), then it is from his friends in Rome that Paul draws his knowledge.

Sanday and Headlam then point to the other way of looking at Romans as a treatise of Christian doctrine. To this they add that Paul has reached a turning point in his career, that he is going up to Jerusalem with no confidence that he will escape with his life, and that this gives an 'added solemnity to his utterance'; for they say that 'it is natural that he should cast back his glance over the years since he became a Christian, and sum up the result as he felt it himself'. The conclusion they reach concerning the letter to the Romans is that:

"The epistle is the ripened fruit of the thought and struggles of the eventful years by which it had been preceded. It is no merely abstract disquisition but a letter full of direct human interest in the persons

to whom it is written ..... but the main theme of the letter is the gathering in of the harvest, at once of the church's history since the departure of its master, and of the individual history of a single soul, that one soul which under God had had the most active share in making the course of external events what it was." (p.xliii - iv).

In this concluding note Sanday and Headlam have some hints as to interpretations of Romans that have since been put forward; for example, that the circumstances of the Roman church as being disrupted and divided were known to Paul (Minear, Marxsen etc.), or that Paul's previous experiences of controversy and debate have influenced much of the content of Romans (e.g. T. W. Manson), or that Paul's personal vocation as apostle to the nations was the motivation for the letter and the stated intention to continue with his work in the west (Fridrichsen, J. Knox). Given a great variation in detail, the main views concerning the purpose of Romans still revolve around two poles, the historical or the doctrinal, and the many theses concerning the aim of the letter can be broadly characterised as one or other of these interpretations. I will consider a selection of the various ideas that have been forwarded to try to explain the motive for, and purpose of, the letter to Rome, and then attempt to draw some conclusions in the light of these.

B. Noack in his article 'Current and Backwater in the Epistle to the Romans' <sup>19</sup> views the main purpose of the letter as informing the Roman Christians of Paul's future plans, and then defending them, in particular his trip to Jerusalem before going to Rome,

an explanation of why the apostle to the Gentiles must go to 'the Jew first'. Other discussions concerning a historical background for the letter to Rome, rely to a greater or lesser degree on the identification of factions in the Roman church and specific problems there, these are inferred from internal evidence in the letter, especially chapter 14ff. Noack argues that in order to understand the function of Romans we must try to look farther than what we usually see as the chief concern of the epistle, i.e. justification by faith alone. Noack agrees that it is beyond doubt that there is a proclamation of the Gospel, but he asks if this is the real message Paul wants to convey to the Roman Christians. Noack's answer is that in fact Chapter 3-8 are 'not the current in Romans, but only a backwater' (p.159). Noack holds that the framework of the epistle contains the real purpose of the letter - to inform the Romans Christians of Paul's future plans. To the Roman Christians it was not self-evident why Paul the apostle to the Gentiles, should be delayed by a visit to Jerusalem. Therefore Paul is compelled to defend himself, to take his starting point in the gospel itself and defend his journey to Jerusalem. This entails defence of the preaching of the Gospel to the Jews and Paul's obligation to them. Noack concludes that chapters 4-8 are a side issue compared with Chapters 9-11, that the 'current' in Romans is the information regarding Paul's plans and defence of preaching the Gospel first to the Jews - the point of the letter being to establish the priority of the Jews and the demand of Jerusalem on Paul. Thus Noack is able to find a historical situation behind Romans in Chapter 1:9-13 and 15:23-9; with an inner theological treatise in 1:14-8:39 - 'current' and

'backwater' respectively.

H. W. Bartsch <sup>20</sup> also notes that Paul's anticipated visit to Rome which is mentioned in the introduction and the conclusion of the letter, offers the definite possibility of understanding it as a doctrinal letter in the sense of a very personal presentation of Pauline theology. On the other hand, Bartsch contends that it is also possible to infer from Romans, not only the situation from which Paul wrote, but also the situation of Roman Christianity to which his letter was addressed.

Bartsch points out that Paul justified his detailed writing with the claim to enlighten the Roman Christians, stressing throughout that he, as apostle to the Gentiles, would lead the Roman Gentile Christians into 'obedience', since Christ works through him (15:15-18). That which he announces in the letter is the beginning of his work in Rome 'by word and deed' (15:18). From this premise Bartsch assumes that the letter refers directly to certain circumstances in Roman Christendom, and that something can be learned of these circumstances from the letter.

The first point that Bartsch makes in recovering the circumstances in Rome, is that Paul, in contrast to his other letters, does not address the Christians in Rome as a congregation; and he suggests that Paul avoided the word 'ἐκκλησία' throughout the letter because he knew that the Christians in Rome did not constitute a united congregation. This observation leads Bartsch to postulate the fundamental thesis of the letter as that of uniting the two factions - that Paul calls himself a 'debtor to Greek and Barbarian, wise and foolish' denotes all men from the standpoint



of educated Greeks; then in contrast to the Greek division of mankind seen in 1:14 stands the present Jewish distinction between Jews and Gentiles, and the Idea of 'to each who believes' abolishes this distinction also.

Bartsch contends that Paul's letter is directed against the 'beginnings of a Christian anti-Semitism' in Rome (p.331), for the devaluation of Jewish Christians which had grown to a climax by the time of the edict of Claudius, now, because of the preponderance of Gentile Christians, was almost complete. Hence the purpose of Romans is directed towards achieving harmony between Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome, and it does this by emphasising throughout their essential unity as Christians.

A similar approach is taken by Paul S. Minear<sup>21</sup> for he attempts to explain Romans against a background of factions in the Roman church, a background that he holds is reflected in Romans 14:1 - 16:27. He contends that we can detect the existence of several groups of Christians at Rome separated from each other by sharp, mutual suspicions. Minear's thesis rests on the notion that Paul, having heard of certain urgent needs in the congregations at Rome, wrote to them in order to 'bring about the obedience of faith' (p.1) - 'Paul saw the basic occasion of the letter as the need of the Roman churches for a stonger, more obedient faith. His intention was to contribute, in so far as he could, to meeting that need'.

Minear identifies the following groups in Rome on the basis of Chapter 14 - the 'weak in faith who condemned the strong in faith', 'the strong in faith who scorned the weak in faith', 'the doubters',

'the weak in faith who did not condemn the strong in faith' and  
 'the strong in faith who did not despise the weak in faith'.

Minear further suggests that in Paul's efforts at reconciliation of these groups in 14:1 - 15:13 he employs twelve axioms<sup>22</sup> and that the purpose of the rest of Romans had been to explain, support, and defend these axioms (p.20), as in the course of the letter Paul addresses one or other of the congregations.

The reconstruction of Romans as put forward by Paul Minear on the basis<sup>of</sup> his thesis concerning divergent groups in Rome, really stretches the small amount of evidence he presents in support of his ideas, and in fact simply goes beyond the facts presented by Romans 14. The beginnings and early structure of the Christian church at Rome are almost totally unknown to us, and certainly it is highly questionable whether the contrast between the weak and strong in one chapter of Romans can indicate such a complex situation as is depicted by Minear. As Kummel points out<sup>23</sup> the equation of the strong and the weak with Gentile and Jewish Christians over the question of eating meat is doubtful, for Judaism knows no basic vegetarianism; since there is no law commanding Jews to abstain from meat or wine the identification of the 'weak' with Jewish Christians is not convincing. Also unconvincing is Minear's contention that the structure of Romans is geared to justifying the twelve axioms he finds in 14:1 - 15:13; and the overall difficulty of the reconstruction is the lack of specific details in Romans if it is to be seen as directed to specific, concrete groups at Rome.

The questions raised by Romans 14:1 - 15:13 are answered in far more convincing fashion in the solution offered by R. J. Karris.<sup>24</sup>

He says that scholars must examine Romans 14:1 - 15:13 more closely before they use its so-called community strife between strong and weak to justify their views of the situation in the Roman community. Karris argues that Romans 14:1 - 15:13 is general Pauline paraenesis without special reference to any situation he knows of in Rome; it is part of a letter which serves to sum up Paul's missionary theology and teaching. Karris further postulates that this section is in fact a generalised adaptation of a position Paul had earlier worked out respecting actual known situations, especially at Corinth; and Karris then compares (p. 163ff) Romans 14:1 - 15:13 with 1 Corinthians 8 - 10. From this detailed comparison Karris concludes that in his treatment in Romans Paul has excluded such personal references as are found in 1 Corinthians, eliminated the circumstantial 'if' clauses which apply his general principles to particular concrete instances within the community (p.167), and omitted the Corinthian catch-words<sup>25</sup> and references to the concrete situation reflected in that letter of the debate concerning food that had been sacrificed to idols. Karris notes that in the Romans passages this teaching is expanded by the use of quotations from the Old Testament scriptures to support and confirm the principles (e.g. 14:11; 15:3, 9-12); the weighty support of the Old Testament is therefore added to Paul's lines of argumentation which had originally, in Corinth, been formulated to deal with an actual situation, but which in Romans are used as the basis of more general paraenesis.

Karris's conclusion is that Paul's imperatives and arguments, addressed as they are to the entire community in Rome, indicate not that he is trying to create a community out of the disarray of the 'strong' and 'weak' congregations, but rather that he is concerned

to show how an established community can through faith and love maintain its unity despite differences. (p.172)

This thesis of Karris is by far the most sensible and convincing concerning the content of Romans 14:1 - 15:13, but there still remains a further example of a 'historical' explanation of Romans which relies on an interpretation of Rom. 14ff. This takes as its starting point the view that the 'strong' are Gentile Christians and the 'weak' Jewish Christians. W. Marxsen<sup>26</sup> believes that in Romans 12ff Paul is dealing with practical problems arising from Jewish/Gentile confrontation, having dealt in chapters 1-8 with the question of Jew and Gentile, then in chapters 9-11 specifically with Gentiles who consider themselves to be 'strong'. Marxsen says that 'the circumstantial approach arises from the fact that Paul is not acquainted with the church and therefore has to set out his argument very cautiously' (p.97).

Marxsen goes on to point to what he terms a 'significant piece of evidence', namely, the Edict of Claudius issued in 49/50 AD expelling Jews from Rome after some violent rioting. According to Suetonius ('life of Claudius' v.25,4) the Jews were expelled following disturbances caused at the instigation of one 'Chrestus'. Marxsen identifies the latter with Christ, pointing to Acts 18:1-2 as supporting such a view; although Marxsen himself notes that there is some doubt about such an identification, and a problem is raised by the question whether Aquila and Prisca were Christians already before they left Rome. However, in spite of such doubts Marxsen goes on to expound his thesis from this point by maintaining that the edict had meant that Gentile Christians had taken over and run the

Christian church in Rome in the absence of Jewish Christians. When Claudius died in 54AD the edict was relaxed, and Jews were able to return to Rome. It is Marxsen's contention that the returning Jewish Christians and those Gentile Christians who had been in charge of the church were now confronting and opposing one another. He concludes that this explains the situation for which Romans was written, and also the difficult passage of Romans 13:1ff, for the purpose of the demand for loyal conduct would then be to avoid another similar edict. Marxsen holds therefore, that Paul's aim in the letter to the Romans is to place Jews and Gentiles side by side as Christian believers, and thereby bring about peace in the church, in which there is tension between the 'strong' and the 'weak' because they have divided views over the Jew/Gentile question.

To return for the moment to the doubts expressed as the legitimacy of the use of the edict of Claudius in gaining knowledge of the situation in the Roman Church: Stephen Benko<sup>27</sup> discusses this edict of Claudius and Suetonius's reference to the 'Chrestus'. He notes the theory which identifies this name 'Chrestus' with that of 'Christus', and the further view that the theological debate over Christianity in Jewish circles had reached violent proportions which resulted in the expulsion order. But he then points out that in fact Suetonius simply says that in AD49 the Jews of Rome were incited to riotous actions by someone called 'Chrestus'. Benko then poses the question that if Suetonius did just mis-spell the name, did he then believe that Christus was still alive in AD49? Benko admits that Chrestus was a common name of the time and therefore possibly easily confused with a similar but more unusual name, but he then objects to this explanation on the ground that there is no hint that

Suetonius is trying to put down a name of which he was not quite sure. Furthermore, the supposition that Suetonius mistook the name would imply that he was ignorant of the existence of the new religion, adherents to which were called Christians, and this Benko says was not so, and he points to 'Nero' VI.16,2 where Suetonius uses the very term 'Christians'. Benko therefore concludes that 'if he (Suetonius) thought that Claudius' edict had anything to do with this 'new and mischievous superstition' he certainly would have known how to spell Christian'.

Benko goes on to add that the years leading up to the Jewish revolt of AD66 - 70 were filled with Jewish/Gentile clashes, and various measures were taken against Jewish excesses; these had nothing to do with Christianity, and it was only because of the occurrence of the name Chrestus that the expulsion of the Jews from Rome in AD49 could be connected with the Christian movement (n.b. there were precedents for expelling Jews from Rome in 139BC and AD19 by Tiberius). Benko's conclusion is that 'we do not have sufficient reason to doubt that Chrestus was a real person who lived in Rome during Claudius' reign; rather we must assume that Suetonius has made no error in his statement. Chrestus was more likely some sort of zealot - a Jewish activist and violently anti-Roman'.

This article by Benko throws a great deal of doubt on the premise that the edict of Claudius had anything to do with Christians in Rome. Although it is still possible to conjecture that some Jewish Christians in Rome at this time would be affected by the edict whatever its cause, this is probably not a sufficient ground on which to base the definite and specific conclusions regarding the

Christian church in Rome that Marxsen's thesis envisages. However, the argument put down by Marxsen has much to commend it, and to accept it even in part is to see a historical situation in Rome in which a Jewish/Gentile problem existed, or at least a situation in which such a controversy as Paul had encountered<sup>er</sup> elsewhere could arise. Merely a vague knowledge of the existence of such tension could create enough concern on the part of Paul to write as he does to Rome. On the other hand, the desire to establish such a background should not take priority over merely reaching conclusions based on the evaluation of the evidence available. Marxsen begins with the (questionable) presupposition that there was division in the Roman church based on the evidence of the 'strong' and the 'weak' referred to in Romans chapter 14, and looks for any possible external evidence to support this. The evidence that he finds does lend some support to his thesis, but as Benko's work shows, this evidence is not without its own difficulties. There are too many doubts surrounding each stage of Marxsen's argument to accept it wholeheartedly; but on the other hand there is too much coincidence involved to reject it out of hand. At best it should be borne in mind as a plausible historical background, but it must remain doubtful whether this can be used to explain and interpret the epistle to the Romans.

The following views of Romans are more in line with the traditional view that Romans was some form of doctrinal treatise, in the sense that it was a summing up of Paul's teaching at the time of writing. However, the modern views of Romans which may be classed as essentially doctrinal in their interpretation of Romans do not in fact dismiss the possibility of ascertaining some understanding of a historical

situation altogether; rather, they give credibility to it by envisaging the letter to Rome as reflecting past controversy, and as written with a view to preventing future flare-ups concerning similar questions.

An article by J. P. Martin entitled 'The Kerygma of Romans' (Interpretation. 25, 1971 p.303-328) does, however, follow the traditional doctrinal way of viewing Romans. Martin maintains that we must read Romans as though it were addressed to the world and not to a particular church, and that the Kerygma of Romans is not restricted, but directed to the total human problem.

In his 'Notes on the text of Romans', J. Knox <sup>29</sup> cites Fridrichsen's suggestion that, on the basis of Galatians 2:7-8, Paul may be seen to recognise two important apostleships, Peter's to the Jews and his own to the Gentiles, and that 'the main motive of Romans is to assert in a discreet way, the apostolic authority and teaching of Paul in the church of Rome'. Furthermore, that 'the epistle to the Romans is probably one line of an extensive correspondence of Paul's with the non-Pauline churches.' This idea that Romans may be one of many such circulars is taken up by J. Knox to the extent that 'it would then be seen as a letter which was originally composed for a type of Gentile church with which Paul wants to establish contact'; and the preoccupation with the Jewish issue might then be explained by Paul's desire to validate and interpret his role as the apostle to the Gentiles for 'some statement of his position on this issue, particularly as it had been a matter of so much controversy and misunderstanding, might seem to be required if he was to establish himself as an accredited apostle to the Gentiles as Peter was to the Jews' (p. 192-3).



Although J. Knox himself says that he is not convinced of the truth of this suggestion, raising the objection that it would not be likely that the Gentile churches generally would be interested in the Jewish issue, he does return to a similar theme in a later article,<sup>29</sup> where he sees Paul's vocation as apostle to the Gentiles as the leading feature and motivation in his missionary work which in turn motivated the writing of Romans.

In this later article Knox holds that the importance of the letter to the Romans lies chiefly in the statement it contains of Paul's gospel, but that the letter is also significant for the light it throws on the apostle's personal situation at the time, or more especially, on his way of understanding that position. One gathers that he regards the first long chapter of his work as an apostle as about to end, and another as about to begin', Knox notes that this is clear from Chapter 15:14-33, but that 'a letter of such length, written at so crucial a moment, must actually reflect Paul's situation far more fully and subtly than we are likely at first glance to discern - where so much is clearly said, much more must be implied' (p.2). Knox says that Paul reveals himself here as being primarily concerned with the gospel, interpreting his own call as apostle as the vocation to preach the gospel to the nations. Knox concludes that Paul's will to fulfil this calling was the overwhelming motive for his writing and preaching and the continuance of the missionary activity - (p.6) 'Paul may well have believed that on him particularly God had laid the responsibility of defending the preaching to the Gentiles, of establishing and protecting the right of the Gentiles to the Gospel.'

It is in the light of his conclusions, that Romans Chapter 16 was

a covering note added to a copy of Romans Chapters 1-15 and sent to Ephesus, that R. W. Manson <sup>30</sup> discusses the purpose of the letter. He suggests that it was written as the considered judgement of Paul on issues he had debated in controversies he had faced earlier in his work; he notes that Paul continually appears to answer objections and meet criticisms of his position in Romans, and these, Manson argues, are a record of real discussions from previous debates (p.239). Manson goes on to say that this impression is confirmed by the sections dealing with Christian practice in Chapter 12:1-15:13. He argues that Chapter 12 takes up the question of unity in the church and stresses afresh the organic conception of the Christian community, an idea that had been formulated to deal with the situation in Corinth where the congregation was split; then Chapter 13:1-10 deals with the relation of the church to civil power (cf. 1 Cor 6), Chapter 13:11-14 touches on matters dealt with in 1 Cor 15; and lastly that Chapter 14:1-15:13 rediscusses the problems which were considered in 1 Cor 8-10.

Manson's conclusion is as follows: "These facts seem to me to lead to the conclusion that we should think of our document primarily as the summing up of positions reached by Paul and his friends at the end of a long controversy whose beginnings appear in 1 Corinthians ... looked at in this way Romans ceases to be just a letter of self-introduction from Paul to the Roman church, and becomes a manifesto setting forth his deepest convictions on central issues." (p.240)

Professor G. Bornkamm <sup>31</sup> presents a view of the letter to the Romans along lines similar to those suggested by Manson; he characterises Romans as the 'Testament of Paul', and shows how, in Romans, the motifs of earlier letters are brought together, but without their previous reference to concrete circumstances.

Professor Bornkamm (Aust.R.p.5) notes that in Romans Paul never mentions anything about information which he had received from Rome, and nowhere does he name informants as he does in other letters. Paul had some general knowledge about the Roman church without details or individual features, for the personal references and allusions to the conditions in this congregation, otherwise so characteristic of Pauline letters, are lacking here. Bornkamm believes therefore that it is not correct to settle on the presence of Judaistic or libertine opponents wherever Paul speaks polemically or in dialogue; rather that this belongs to his customary manner and method of argumentation which we also recognise in the so-called hellenistic diatribe 32; Bornkamm says (p.6) that 'Paul handles his hearers and listeners as partners in a conversation and allows himself to be presented with objections and counter-questions from them ... but these objections always arise out of the subject, or even better said, out of a misunderstanding of the subject. In no way do they demand an appeal to particular groups or opponents in Rome'.

Bornkamm, then, first establishes that we are on the wrong track with questions about the actual conditions of the church at Rome, and then looks for an alternative explanation of the exceptional content of the letter to the Romans. He points out that most of the themes and motifs of the letter are found already to a great extent in Paul's earlier letters, especially in Galatians, the Corinthian letters and Philipians, and he notes (p.7) that 'the letter to the Romans clearly reflects previous questions and perceptions arising out of stirring conflicts in the years directly preceding its

composition'; it follows, therefore, that it is not a 'textbook of Pauline dogmatics' which accidentally happened to be clothed in the form of a letter, but it does reflect the history which lay behind Paul and the churches he had established. On this point Bornkamm is in agreement with T. W. Manson; both believe that Romans was written from the standpoint of the controversies Paul had encountered during his missionary endeavours in the East.

On the other hand, Bornkamm goes on to say that it seems inadequate to understand Romans as a mere report and record of former controversies, for in Romans (p.9) 'as never before, great themes of Paul's message and theology are coherently discussed in depth and breadth in a carefully considered outline'. Bornkamm then finds examples to demonstrate the close degree in which Romans is related to the earlier letters. 33

In comparing the treatment in Romans of some of the themes which are to be found in the earlier letters, Bornkamm notes that there are important distinctions to be made. For example, in the earlier letters the thought is characterised by a definite polemical character and context, but in Roman these fronts can no longer be perceived; the concrete references have disappeared, and the occasional dress removed - (p.12) 'Instead, all of these ideas are now carefully reconsidered, more profoundly substantiated, and usually placed in a larger context. Above all, they have now received a strongly universal meaning, and they bear a sense that is no longer valid just for these or just for those, but for all'. Bornkamm's conclusion is that the letter to the Romans, (p.14) 'even if unintended, has in fact become the historical

testament of the apostle'.

Bornkamm is surely correct in challenging the propriety of efforts to understand the content of Romans on the assumption that it reflects a special situation of conflict within the Roman church; and, on the other hand, right in holding that it is no dogmatic treatise but is grounded in Paul's previous experiences and struggles during the course of his missionary work and his organising of a collection for Jerusalem. In considering Bornkamm's thesis, one cannot deny that in fact Romans did become Paul's 'last will and Testament', but this is not really an explanation of why Paul should write such a letter at that particular time and send it to Rome.

M. J. Suggs in his article 'The Word is near you ... ' <sup>34</sup>, says that Bornkamm's solution, though eminently attractive, is not finally persuasive; for if, as Bornkamm holds, the old problems surrounding the issues of Jew/Gentile, law/gospel, were still so acute that there was some question as to whether the collection would be accepted in Jerusalem, then, asks Suggs, 'how did Paul escape to the heights of serenity from which such a universalisation of the old but still persistent themes could be issued'? Furthermore, Suggs objects to Bornkamm's explanation of the character of Romans on the grounds that he does not explain why the Roman church should be an appropriate recipient for the 'testament', for here Bornkamm has to return to the understanding of Romans as a letter of self-introduction.

It is Sugg's suggestion that the 'letter is a brief drawn up by Paul in anticipation of the renewed necessity of defending his Gospel in

Jerusalem' (p.295). Suggs agrees that the period of the collection had been one of great controversy characterised by such antitheses as Gospel/law, Christian/Jew, Church/Judaism etc., and that these so far unsettled issues had yet to be finally resolved, as Suggs sees the situation (p.296) - "The question boils down to this: whether the apostle to the Gentiles, who will in no wise place himself under his own anathema by preaching 'another Gospel' can nevertheless cope with attacks on his attitude toward Israel and the Law. With that in view he advances both the objections to his position and his reasoned, strangely passionless (in comparison with Galatians) answers. He develops a brief. It necessarily goes back over the ground which the controversies of the collection period have occupied."

Suggs goes on to point out that the brief is not prepared as a mere summary of the controversies now ended, but also in anticipation of a situation in which they may break out afresh.

This far Sugg's article is most perceptive and stimulating, and an aid in the formulation of my notion that Romans is an apologetic work (see below); but I cannot agree with his further contention that Romans was merely a circular stating the Pauline 'party-line' to churches that Paul had neither founded nor visited (p.297). Suggs believes it likely that several such churches received this 'circular brief', and he accepts R. W. Manson's view that a copy of Romans 1-15 plus Chapter 16 was the form which was sent to Ephesus.

The conclusion that Suggs reaches concerning Romans is that it is 'a pre-Jerusalem brief prepared 'for others - and Rome' .... it is his aim to make his positions as palatable as possible, both because

of the Jews whose knowledge of his reputation would make them dangerously suspicious of him, and because of his determination to make it possible for the collection to serve as an efficacious symbol of the oneness of the church' (p.297).

When Suggs calls Romans a 'brief', 'a defence of the gospel' (p.297) he is, in my view, using the most productive approach for gaining a good understanding of the letter to Rome; but when he says further that it is a circular to various churches, then he falls short of answering his own main question - why should this letter be addressed to Rome? For to treat Romans merely as a circular letter, albeit a defensive brief, is to take away the distinctive character of the letter as addressed to the capital of the Empire; after all, Paul does not say that he writes to several churches, but he does say that he writes to Rome which has to be the strategic centre for the furtherance of his missionary goals.

There are many theories concerning the purpose of the letter to the Romans as this survey has shown; I will now use the good points and suggestions they make in supporting the thesis that the letter to the Romans is a deliberative apology.

Deliberative speaking follows the same rules as for forensic defence regarding structure, but its aim is more positively to exhort and persuade the hearer to adhere to a certain course of belief or action, than merely to defend against specific objections, charges or accusations. The deliberative work is apologetic in the sense that it both defends and at the same time commends one way of thinking against another. This being so, then one of the main features of deliberative composition must be the technique of anticipation - the meeting and forestalling of possible objections in the course

of a positive exposition of that being commended.

In Romans 15:24-28 Paul writes that he intends to visit Rome and from there to travel west to Spain, but that first he must go to Jerusalem with the collection. Concern for the outcome of this journey to Jerusalem leads Paul to ask the Roman Christians for their prayers (15:30). Paul speaks of the trip with a sense of great uneasiness, stating that he fears persecution at the hands of the Jews, and further that he is not even certain that the Jerusalem church is going to accept the proceeds of the collection of the Gentile Christian communities. The possibility of such a rejection by the Jerusalem church means that Paul, as apostle to, and champion of, Gentile Christians, cannot withdraw from the dangers he foresees in Judaea. Rather, he must face the Jerusalem hierarchy personally to champion the cause of Gentile Christianity and make sure the collection is accepted there, establishing it as a symbol of the unity of the whole church thereby legitimising, once and for all, the mission to the Gentiles as well as that to the Jews. K. F. Nickle ('The Collection' 1966) describes the collection as: "The first venture which was consciously inaugurated for the purpose of restoring the disrupted unity of the church .... With this expression of solidarity Paul was simultaneously insisting on the authenticity of his apostleship to the Gentiles and the validity of their election into the fellowship of Christ" (p.9-10).

It is Nickle's contention that Paul's announcement in Romans 15:25ff of his impending trip to Jerusalem to deliver the collection was not an abrupt shift from lofty to mundane matters. Rather, that it is directly connected to the preceding 'theological' material of the



whole epistle, and in particular refers back to the discussion of the role of the Gentile mission for the eventual conversion of Israel in Chapters 9-11. The conveying of the collection and representatives of the Gentile churches to Jerusalem was the irrefutable evidence to the Jews that the 'Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that it, righteousness through faith' (p.134-5. Romans 9:31; 10:12).

Certainly the forthcoming visit of Paul to Jerusalem with the collection is a mile-stone in his work as apostle; at best the outcome could be the acceptance of the collection as the seal of unity between Jewish and Gentile Christianity. At worst the Jerusalem visit could result in a further breach and split between Jewish and Gentile Christians; or possible only a further tentative and shaky agreement followed by a further period of dispute and controversy concerning whether Gentiles might be included and, if so, on what terms, and the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Paul certainly had grave forebodings concerning his forthcoming visit to Jerusalem, for even apart from his specific statements in Romans Chapter 15 showing that he was aware that the situation was dangerous, and of the possibility of rejection in Jerusalem, there is also the note in 1 Corinthians 16:1-9 where Paul discusses his future plans with reference to the collection. He says here that he will transport the collection with the delegates of the churches if he must (1 Corinthians 16:4), the probable implication being that he will only travel with them to Jerusalem if there be some likelihood that the collection and all it stands for is in some

jeopardy; that is, if he must be present in order to plead the cause of the unity of the Gentile and Jewish Christian churches and the unrestricted acceptance of Gentile believers into the church; this would therefore necessarily entail a defence yet again of the whole position he had maintained as apostle to the Gentiles, and of his gospel of freedom in Christ and justification by faith.

If this be so, then the circumstances are strikingly similar to those reflected in Galatians 2, and could therefore have had the same outcome, in continued opposition to Paul and all he stood for. Rome would be a likely target for furthering a viewpoint opposite to Paul's, for as capital of the Empire it could wield increasing influence, and opposition to Paul there could damage the mission to the west that Paul envisaged. Such an eventuality is anticipated by Paul when he writes to Rome. His position is clearly stated in persuasive terms, stating a reasoned case to the Roman Christians in order to enlist their support and friendship for the future.

Throughout his Christian career, Paul as 'apostle to the Gentiles', fought to resolve the problems facing the expanding church concerning the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Paul was an apologist for the Christian gospel as he understood it and foresaw its future; he defended and commended this understanding on two fronts - to Jew and Greek. He realised well enough that to move away from Judaism altogether could mean that Christianity might become a syncretistic 'gnostic' sect losing the authoritative base of the Old Testament scriptures; while to retain the legalistic side of contemporary Judaism might mean losing the uniqueness of the Christian revelation and becoming a Jewish apocalyptic sectarian

movement. So Paul steered a delicate middle course, retaining what he considered to be the good points of the old religion (e.g. scriptures), while rejecting the restrictive ones (e.g. legalism, nationalism), and aiming at a unified Christian church made up of the believing Jew and Gentile alike - the new, spiritual Israel, heir to the Old Testament promises through faith in Christ.

The letter to the Romans serves as a climax to Paul's controversial career as an apologist; it expounds his interpretation of the Christian message as he preached it, justifying its application to Jew and Gentile alike, the deciding criterion for the Christian being faith alone. Viewed in retrospect in this way, Romans does act as a 'testament' of Paul (Bornkamm), a summary statement of his conclusions (T. W. Manson). Paul writes to Christians in Rome to explain his gospel of which he 'is not ashamed' (Grayston - see below p. 225), thereby establishing his position as apostle to the Gentiles (Fridrichsen, J. Knox), and offering a defence of his attitude concerning Jewish/Gentile relations in anticipation of further debate on this subject (Suggs, Jervell <sup>35</sup>). It would be useful to be able to maintain that Rome was experiencing its own Jewish/Gentile internal tensions and that Paul knew of them (Marxsen), and hence explain Paul's immediate concern to write to Rome; but there is too little evidence by which to gauge a concrete situation in Rome or even Paul's knowledge of it were it possible (Paul Minear/Karris). It remains only a possibility that there was tension between Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome, but if such were the case, or would possibly be the case in the future, then Paul's name could well be bandied about and abused, necessitating a defence of his beliefs and actions (Noack) and teaching (O. Michel <sup>36</sup>).

My own suggestion is that the letter to the Romans is a deliberative apology, thought out and structured in accordance with rhetorical guide lines. It aims to persuade the Christians of Rome to accept this, the gospel commended by Paul the 'called' apostle to the nations, and adhere to it despite objections which may be raised against it, for such objections as shown to be groundless.

The implications are, that if all goes well in Jerusalem then he, Paul, will continue his work in the west with the support of Rome; if controversy and disunity result from the discussions in Jerusalem, then the Roman Christians are forearmed against the possible ensuing propaganda of 'judaists' and their denigration of Paul and his gospel.

#### Romans: A Deliberative Apology

Paul's letter to the Romans contains a deliberation which aims both to commend and to defend the gospel as he preaches it. Romans 1:1-7 and 16:1-24 make up the epistolary framework for the well reasoned and formally structured deliberation contained in Romans 1:8 - 15:33. An analysis of the structure of the letter would be as follows:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1:1-7     | expanded epistolary prescript.   |
| 1:8-18    | Introduction to the deliberative content.<br>(1 v.16-18 - transitus.)            |
| 1:18-3:20 | Narrative, the statement of facts<br>(3:1-20 - summary of the narrative section) |
| 3:21-31   | Proposition  |
| 4:1-14:23 | Proof section.   |
| (15:1-13  | Paraenesis.) Mixed up with final proposition.                                    |

15:14-33 Conclusion of the Deliberation

16:1-end Epistolary Postscript

(16:1-16 - digression to furnish a letter of introduction for Phoebe.)

Romans 1:1-7 - Epistolary Prescript

The opening of the letter states Paul's name as the sender, and this is expanded in a characteristic Pauline fashion by further calling him 'servant of Jesus Christ, called as an apostle .... separated for the gospel of God'. Here, at the very beginning of the letter, Paul's status is explicitly stated and confirmed, and his gospel is characterised as that which had been promised by the scriptures (v.2). The letter opening is further expanded to give what looks to be a traditional Christian Christological formula (v.3-4). This is followed by a further reference to Paul's position as apostle to the Gentiles, then the addressees are named as 'those who are beloved of God in Rome, called saints', and the greeting 'grace and peace from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ'.

Romans 1:8-18 - Introduction

These verses function as the introduction or exordium of the deliberation that is contained in this letter. A thanks-giving offered to God is a characteristic opening gambit on the part of Paul, who then reminds the reader that he is a servant of the Gospel which establishes his right to be heard; the calling of God to witness adds authority to what he is to say, and is also a rhetorical device to engage the attention of the audience. Paul's mention of his prayers on behalf of those he now addresses, and of his wish to visit them gives the effect of a conciliatory note, creating a

favourable impression here at the start of the discourse.

The formal disclosure formula 'I do not wish you to be ignorant ....' introduces the motive for writing the letter; it is to serve as a substitute for a personal appearance by Paul which has had to be delayed.

A parallel and more extended 'travelogue' passage comes at the end of the Deliberation (chapter 15:14-33); Paul's authoritative statement of the gospel may be conveyed by this letter substitute, for it possesses the 'apostolic parousia' (See article by R. Funk - see below p. 232) which adds authority to its message.

1:v.16-18 form the 'transitus' from the introduction to the statement of facts or narrative section which is to follow. The ~~#~~transitus states the cause of the case in question - i.e. the reason for writing this letter to Rome, providing an end for the introduction which is distinguishable as such and in harmony with the content of the narrative section. Paul states his reason for writing; negatively, because he is 'not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ he preaches in spite of criticism and objections; for, positively, as he will explain, it is 'the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes', for in the Gospel the 'righteousness of God is revealed'. The defensive note indicated by the words 'I am not ashamed ...', is coupled with the promise of the positive exposition of the Gospel. These two aspects of defence and positive exposition are contained throughout the deliberation that is to follow.

That Paul strikes such a defensive note in v.16 is also suggested in an article by K. Grayston <sup>37</sup> in which he says that Paul states that

he is not ashamed of the Gospel because someone had told him that he ought to be. Grayston holds that Romans is designed to refute charges against the gospel which claimed it was immoral (because it relied exclusively on grace) and anti-semitic (because it drew Gentiles into the people of God); Paul states that he is not ashamed of the gospel in spite of such criticism.

This suggestion is a useful one for the thesis that Romans is an apologia, as it lends a defensive slant early in the letter. However, Grayston's subsequent exegesis of Romans in the light of his belief that Paul is answering specific opponents is not convincing.<sup>38</sup>

There is no real evidence to support the view that Paul is replying to some concrete historical opposition here in Romans; it is far more likely that Paul, in the style of the Diatribe, raises the objections himself on behalf of an imaginary opponent in order to dismiss them; such a degree of anticipation is common in deliberative pleading. This need not detract from the initial suggestion that Paul's words in iv.16 contain a defensive element, and the stage is set for further apologetic elements throughout the discourse.

That the claim by Paul 'I am not ashamed of the Gospel' reflects the psychological response to the thought of preaching in the splendid capital of Rome, is contested by Professor C. K. Barrett.<sup>39</sup>

Professor Barrett points to the construction of Paul's sentence, noting that in i.15 Paul has just said that he is ready to preach the Gospel in Rome, and in v.16 the ground on which this readiness rests - 'οὐ γὰρ ἐκασχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον'. Professor Barrett makes the comment - 'That is to say, the not being ashamed of the Gospel is an antecedent condition which is not in itself necessarily connected with the particular circumstances Paul has in mind' (p.117).

Professor Barrett then turns to consider the use of the verb 'αἰσχύνεσθαι' elsewhere in Paul. It appears in Phil. 1:20, and taking the context to be that of Paul awaiting trial, the meaning is that whatever happens he will not be put to shame - 'Such a ground of confidence is in itself a clear indication that not being ashamed is an antecedent, Christian, rather than social condition; its cause lies not in Paul's relation to his environment but in the nature of the Gospel' (p.117). Similarly, the use of the same verb in 2 Corinthians 10:8 is in the context of Paul's apostleship and gospel being put to the test, and Paul says that he is not ashamed for he is confident that his gospel can stand any trial.

In 1:16, when Paul states the cause of his writing the present letter to the Romans, he indicates that his gospel can stand the test of criticism and objection, and that by an exposition of it combined with the refutation of any such objection to its doctrines he will persuade the Roman Christians of the truth of what he preaches.

#### Romans 1:18 - 3:20 - Narrative, Statement of facts

In deliberative oratory this section, which narrates 'facts' which are now past, is used as a means of winning belief, and setting the stage for the proposition that is to follow. In the case of Romans this section narrates the fate of man as he existed under the 'wrath' of God - a situation, which for the Christian believer, is now past. In the pagan world the 'facts' which represented man under the 'wrath' of God were the phenomena such as promiscuity, crime, war etc. (1:24-32), and this depravity is explained as a result of not having due reverence for God - of reverencing the creature and not the creator. More hopeful notes are struck in 2 v. 10-16 which hint at the propositions of the Christian gospel which Paul will expound



as the remedy and alternative to this way of life. The Jews are also said to be equally guilty of this wrong attitude to God. They misunderstood their position for they 'boasted' and put confidence in their human ability to attain to righteousness, they relied on their own efforts rather than submitting to God. Following this statement of the state of the Jew under the 'wrath' of God, 2 v. 28-29 gives another hint of the positive message of salvation that can establish the reconciliation between man and God and so change the whole situation.

3:1-20 sums up this narrative section, the conclusion reached is that all men - Jew and Gentile alike - were guilty of a wrong approach to God - 'There is not a righteous one, not even one' (v.10) - and that there was a need of a reconciliation to be accomplished between man and God.

#### Romans 3:21-31 - Proposition

The 'facts' just narrated of man under the 'wrath' of God are past for the Christian as the emphatic 'now' of 3 v. 21 establishes. The facts had been the cause of the need for the Christian message, and offer of a way of reconciliation between man and his creator. The proposition section sets out the basic tenets of the Christian message as proclaimed by Paul, and it is these propositional statements <sup>to</sup> ~~for~~ which Paul will go <sup>for</sup> ~~to~~ support in the proof section of the deliberation which follows (Romans 4:1 - 14:23) by a system of well organised and structured arguments and illustrations.

The positive side of any deliberation with the aim of persuading its audience to accepting one way of thinking and acting rather than another, must necessarily be balanced with the negative refutation

of alternatives, the anticipation and removal of objections and depreciatory points of view. In the course of the argument in Romans such refutative elements are mingled with the positive exposition of the Christian Gospel as Paul understands and preaches it.

Positively, the new situation proposed in this section is that the righteousness of God has been manifested in the Gospel and that salvation is attained through the blood of Christ by all who have faith. Believers are justified by the gift of God which is redemption through Christ; this salvation is available to all men, both Jew and Gentile, because the criterion is faith.

Negatively, this new situation is 'apart from the Law', therefore boasting in human achievement is excluded, for salvation is a gift of God in spite of the sin of man. Salvation is through faith, works of law cannot achieve this end.

Combining these two elements Paul claims that the Gospel does not negatively deny value to the old law, but rather presents the proper understanding of it in the light of the total revelation of God as manifested in the Christian message.

Romans 3:21-31 sets out ten propositions which Paul will go on to illustrate and expand in the 'proof' section. The basic propositional statement of 3 v.21 is contained in all the proofs and arguments which Paul presents: that the Gospel is the manifestation of the righteousness of God, that it is apart from law i.e. Jewish legalism, and that the Old Testament scriptures witness the truth of the Gospel in the sense that Christianity fulfils the prophecies etc.

The ten propositions that will be seen to correspond to ten divisions

of the proof section are as follows:

1. v.22 - Righteousness of God is attained through faith in  
Jesus Christ by all who believe.
2. v.23 - All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.
3. v.24 - Justification is a gift of God.
4. v.25 - Jesus Christ is the means of reconciliation.
5. v.26 - Sin in the past has been overlooked, through God's  
forbearance - At the present time God justifies men  
through faith in Christ.
6. v.27 - Boasting excluded.  
Law of works replaced by law of faith.
7. v.28 - Man is justified now by faith apart from works of law.
8. v.29 - God is God of both Jews and Gentiles.
9. v.30 - God will justify both Jews and Gentiles by faith.
10. v.31 - Law then of no value? - No the law is established.

The basic assertion is that 3:21-31 is taken up in the following Chapters in more detail, and it seems that 3:21-31 can be broken down into ten points. There is some artificiality about such a pattern anyway, so it may not fit exactly, but <sup>if</sup> it does fit in a significant number of places, then it is a reasonable proposition.

#### Romans 4:1 - 14:23 - Proof

The premise set out in 3:21 is Paul's starting point in presenting the Gospel - it is the offer of redemption through faith in Christ quite apart from any human achievement (i.e. works of law), and the Old Testament scriptures support this contention. In view of this the confirmation offered in the 'proofs' contains either an Old Testament text or a Christian authoritative tradition to support it,

together with some polemic against the legalistic or Jewish nationalistic misinterpretation of the scriptures.

The ten propositions of 3:21-31 are expanded, explained, and confirmed by rational argumentation or interpretations of relevant texts which are adduced in support.

1. (v.22 faith for all) ..... 4:1-24
2. (v.23 all come short of the glory of God) ... 5:1-11
3. (v.24 Justified now by gift of God) ..... 5:12-21
4. (v.25 Christ - the means of reconciliation) . 6:1-10
5. (v.26 sin past/faith now justifies) ..... 6:11-23
6. (v.27 Boasting excluded) ..... 7:1-24  
(law of works replaced by faith - cf. 7:6)
7. (v.28 man justified by faith apart from law) 8:1-30
8. (v.29 God is of both Jews and Gentiles) ..... 8:31 - 9:29
9. (v.30 God will justify both Jews and Gentiles) 9:30 - 11:24  
(11:16-24 - an illustrative digression) 11:25-36 sums up
10. (v.31 law established) ..... 12:1 - 14:23

#### Romans 15:1-13 - Paraenesis

This exhortatory section was particularly employed in the philosophical treatises, especially the Diatribe. It is regularly employed by Paul in his letters, summing up the position for which he has argued in terms of practical application. This paraenetic section in Romans follows on from and sums up the conclusions reached in the establishing of the Christian ethical principles of 12:1 - 14:23.

Romans 15:14-32 - Conclusion

In conclusion a deliberation should make a final appeal to the reader to accept the propositions that have been put forward. The claim by Paul to have written 'boldly' (v.15), and the reaffirmation of his authority as apostle to the nations, are typical of the reminders that made up the concluding section. The 'apostolic parousia' (see 186-7 ) is contained in v.19-29 and corresponds to the parallel opening statement in 1:8ff. R. Funk<sup>40</sup> isolates the section which he terms the 'apostolic parousia' as a structural element in the Pauline letter. This section serves to establish the authority which underpins the statements expounded in the course of the letters, that authority being apostolic. The written communication serves as a substitute for the personal presence of the apostle, but nevertheless carries the same weight of authority.

The final exhortation and prayer contained in 15:30-33 brings the deliberative composition to its climax and its close. Paul here follows the advice of those orators who held that an effective conclusion is not only concise and impressive, but that it should also evoke pity and sympathy, for v.31,32 serve this purpose admirably.

Romans 16 - Epistolary Postscript

This final section conforms to the epistolary convention in closing the letter, the final salutations given in 16:21 ff. A note of introduction is supplied for Phoebe in a digression which takes up 16:1-17. This is followed by a strong warning against being deceived

by false teaching. This is prompted by the use of the introductory letter form by Paul which leads him to issue a warning against the possible recurrence of a similar situation as that reflected in 2 Corinthians which had involved the unscrupulous use of such letters of introduction.

Chapter 6. Notes - Paul's letter to the Romans

1. R. M. Hawkins - 'Romans: A Reinterpretation'  
(J. B. L. LX. 1941. p. 129-140)

Pointing to 2 Pet. 3:16, Hawkins starts with the assumption that the difficulties encountered in the study of Paul do not arise from what the apostle wrote, but from the fact that his letters have been modified by those who sought to bring them into harmony with a later orthodoxy. Hawkins holds that 'by one hand or another our canonical epistle was very early modified' for 'the original letter was written to Roman Christians in a church intensely Jewish in sympathy, if not actual make-up, to commend to them Paul's own characteristically hellenistic interpretation of the Christian gospel', and that orthodox views were imposed on the original material; Hawkins goes on to pin-point these interpolations which he finds throughout the epistle.

2. J. J. Kinoshita - 'Romans - Two Writings Combined'.  
(Nov. Test. 7 1964/5 p. 258 ff.)
3. For a summary discussion of these varying manuscript traditions see C. E. B. Cranfield's commentary on Romans ICC p.6.
4. C. K. Barrett, O. Michel, W. Marxsen, T. W. Manson, H. W. Bartsch, K. Donfried, W. G. Kummel.
5. Against Pauline authorship - unusual style and odd expressions; the idea that the Gospel has been 'a secret hidden since eternal ages ... now revealed through prophetic writings'.
6. C. E. B. Cranfield - 'Romans' I.C.C. Vol.1 p.8.
7. T. W. Manson - 'St Paul's Letter to the Romans - and Others.'  
(B. J. R. L. 31 1948 p.224ff.)
8. Cranfield. p.9.
9. W. G. Kummel - 'Introduction to the New Testament'  
Revised edition 1975. p. 318
10. E. J. Goodspeed - 'Phoebe's Letter of Introduction'.  
(H. T. R. 44 1951 p.55ff)
11. J. I. H. MacDonald - 'Was Romans XVI a separate letter?'  
(N. T. S. 16 1969/70 p. 369 ff)
12. Tasucharion's letter to her brother Nilus - Fayum (2nd AD, and letter of Ammonius to his sister Teachnumi - Imperial period, Egypt - see Deissmann 'Light from the Ancient East' p.234ff
13. Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 1962 in Oxyrhynchus Papyri X - ed. B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt. 1914

14. Deissmann - 'Light ...' p.235
15. B. N. Kaye - 'To the Romans - and Others' - revisited'  
(Nov. Test. XVIII 1976 p.37ff)
- Kaye discusses the internal arguments for an Ephesian destination for Romans 16 and finds them unconvincing.
16. C. K. Barrett - 'The Epistle to the Romans'  
(A & C Black 19) p.281-282
17. W. G. Kümmel - op.cit. p.312
18. Sanday and Headlam - 'The Epistle to the Romans'  
I. C. C. 1900
19. B. Noack - 'Current and Backwater in the Epistle to the Romans'.  
(St. Theol. 19 1968 p. 155 ff)
20. H. W. Bartsch - 'The Historical Situation of Romans'  
(Encounter 33 1972 p. 329-339)
21. Paul S. Minear - 'The Obedience of Faith'. S. B. T. 1971
22. Examples of these axioms - 'God has welcomed him', 'If your brother is being injured by what you eat, you are not longer walking in love'.
23. W. G. Kümmel - op.cit. p.310 - 311
24. R. J. Karris - 'Romans 14:1 - 15:13 and the Occasion of Romans'  
(c. B. Q. 35 1973 p. 155-178)
25. Karris gives these catchwords as 1 Corinthians 8:1, 10:23; 8:9; 10:29b; 8:7, 10, 12; 10:25, 27, 28, 29.
26. W. Marxsen - 'Introduction to the New Testament' 1968
27. Stephen Benko - 'The Edict of Claudius of AD49 and the instigator Chrestus'  
(Theologische Zeitschrift 25 1969 p.406 ff)
28. J. P. Martin - 'The Kerygma of Romans'  
(Interpretation 25 1971 p.303-328)
29. J. Knox - 'A Note on the Text of Romans'  
(n. T. S. 2 1955/6 p.191 ff)
- See also Anton Fridrichsen - 'The Apostle and his Message'  
1947 p. 7-8
- J. Knox - 'Romans 15:14-33 and Paul's Conception of his Apostolic mission'  
(J. B. L. 83 1964 p. 1 ff)
30. T. W. Manson - BJRL 31 148 p.239ff



31. G. Bornkamm - 'The letter to the Romans as Paul's last will and Testament'  
(Australian Biblical Review 1963 p.2-14)

G. Bornkamm - 'Romans as Paul's Testament' in 'Paulus' p. 88ff

32. In the chapter in 'Paulus' p. 88ff, G. Bornkamm points to examples taken from the diatribe style as parallels to Paul's way of writing in Romans concerning the raising of questions and objections.
33. Bornkamm cites sixteen examples of Paul's reworking of themes in Romans from earlier letters. Aust. Bib. Rev. 1968 p. 9-11
34. M. Jack Suggs - 'The Word is near you' : Romans 10:6-10 within the purpose of the letter'  
(Festschrift for J. Knox 1967 p. 289 ff)
35. J. Jervell - 'Der Brief nach Jerusalem. Über Veranlassung und Adresse des Römerbriefes.'  
(St. Theol. 25 1971 p.61-73)
36. O. Michel - Der Brief an die Römer.

Michel maintains that Romans is a 'didactic letter' setting out an apologia - 'What we have in the letter to the Romans is the exegetical demonstration that Paul's preaching confronts both Judaism and paganism in the proper way with the truth of the gospel' (p.4)

37. K. Grayston - 'Not ashamed of the Gospel' : Romans 1:16a and the structure of the Epistle'  
(Texte u. Unter ... 87 1964)

38. Grayston analyses the structure of Romans thus:

1:18 - 3:20 - argues the gospel is not antinomian

3:21 - 5:21 - salvation is to both Jew and Gentile

6:1 - 8:39 - Defence of the gospel of grace.

ch. 9 - 11 - answer to the objection that God has broken the promise to Israel, therefore this cannot be divine righteousness.

Concludes with practical counsel.

Grayston concludes that this coherent structure of Romans is discerned if we begin by understanding that Paul was moved to write by an accusation that his gospel was a shameful thing, and that this charge was never far from his mind.

39. C. K. Barrett - I am not ashamed of the Gospel - in New Testament Essays. p. 116 ff

40. R. Funk - The Apostolic Parousia : Form and Significance  
(Festschrift for J. Knox)

## Chapter 7

### Paul's Letter to the Galatians

The aim of this chapter is to show that the letter to the Galatians presents Paul's forensic defence of his apostolic status and of the Gospel of Christ as he proclaimed it in Galatia. I hope to show that the letter is carefully constructed along the rhetorical guidelines for presenting a defence in court. Far from being an agitated and emotional reply in the heat of a controversy with no overall design, the letter to the Galatians is a carefully thoughtout composition for the defence, involving detailed argumentation, 'proofs', and the countering of polemic forwarded by the accusers.

The consideration of the overall structure and aim of Galatians is not a new approach, for Professor H. D. Betz <sup>1</sup> has written a well-considered and comprehensive guide in understanding the letter in this way, and I am indebted to his lead and the suggestions he has made in this respect. Professor Betz writes, 'In the process of my studies I found that the letter to the Galatians can be analysed according to the Graeco-Roman rhetoric and epistemology. Apparently this has never been realised before, with the possible exception of Joseph Barber Lightfoot. In his still valuable commentary he has an outline in which he uses the term 'narrative' for the first two chapters, 'argumentative' for chapter iii and iv, and 'hortatory' for v1 - v1.10. These are indeed the proper terms if we analyse the letter according to Graeco-Roman rhetoric, but Lightfoot never betrays whether or not he was aware of this fact.' <sup>2</sup>

Certainly, in his commentary, J. B. Lightfoot <sup>3</sup> is aware of the essential unity of the structure of Galatians, he writes:

"The epistle to the Galatians is especially distinguished among St. Paul's letters by its unity of purpose. The Galatian apostasy in its double aspect, as a denial of his own authority and a repudiation of the doctrine of grace, is never lost sight of from beginning to end. The opening salutation broaches this twofold subject .... The long historical explanation which succeeds is instinct with this motive in all its details. The body of the letter, the doctrinal argument, is wholly occupied with it. The practical exhortations which follow all or nearly all flow from it, either as cautions against a rebound to the opposite extreme, or as suggesting the true rule of life of which the Galatians were following the counterfeit. Lastly in the postscript he again brings it prominently forward." <sup>3</sup>

This summary of J. B. Lightfoot's takes in much of the atmosphere of the Galatian epistle; its cohesiveness and its sense of purpose in winning back the Galatians from their misunderstanding pervades the whole letter, and its structure is geared to this end.

John Bligh also shares the view that Galatians was written with care and skill rather than dashed off in the heat of the moment of controversy whilst 'quivering with indignation'. <sup>4</sup> Bligh believes that Paul wrote the epistle slowly and laboriously, incorporating into it arguments which he had first formulated some years earlier at Antioch. He holds that the 'Galatian crisis' was only one of a long series of incidents in which the protracted debate with the Judaisers was fought out'. <sup>5</sup> It is Bligh's contention that the theological arguments proposed in 2:15 - 5:13 were nearly all

formulated at the time of the Antioch incident, and that was the real crisis.

The difficulty with Bligh's argument, as he himself notes, is that the epistle to the Galatians as we have it would represent an advanced stage in the controversy, the earlier phases of which we have difficulty in constructing. As Bligh points out, we do not know exactly what arguments were advanced against Paul's position in Galatia; or why, in spite of Paul's warnings, the Galatians so quickly succumbed to the Judaisers' arguments. However, we can suggest a probable situation in Galatia, and why Paul wrote to the church there.

An interesting suggestion is made by R. Jewett <sup>6</sup> that the agitators came from outside to Galatia; that they showed cunning in the way they attempted to undermine Paul's authority and teaching there, for they did not merely oppose his teaching directly, but rather claimed to 'perfect' or 'complete' it. <sup>7</sup>

It seems credible that the Judaising opponents in Galatia had cunningly advanced their interpretation of the Gospel by claiming that Paul, who was subordinate to the apostles in Jerusalem, had preached only part of the Gospel, and that this they were now completing, and with the authority of Jerusalem behind them. Paul countered this approach with a reasoned apology of his personal and divine commission as an apostle; he discredited the teaching of his opponents with a clever defence strategy drawing out the 'old' law-bound implications of circumcision and observance of the Jewish calendar, thereby underlining the meaning of the 'Gospel of Freedom' he preached to the Galatians; and leaving no doubts that the Judaising position was

opposed to his and in no way a perfection or completion of it.

For Paul, a Judaising position, however it was presented, was a fundamental distortion of the Gospel, resting on a misunderstanding of the efficacy of Christ's death, and on a misinterpretation of the Old Testament scriptures. As J. Bligh comments, 'the whole destiny of the church was at stake in this controversy between St. Paul and the Judaisers'.<sup>8</sup>

The problem that Paul faced in Galatia was that his converts there were prepared to observe the Jewish Law and its injunctions believing that this supplied some security. Because of this Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians defending his presentation of the Gospel, and attacking that of his Judaising opponents, drawing out some of the implications of both sides: negatively, subservience to law and 'elements'; positively, the freedom offered by the cross of Christ.

The purpose of the letter to the Galatians was to defend all that Paul stood for on his understanding of being an 'apostle of Christ', and how he conceived of his commission, and to provide an authoritative and persuasive apologia for his case. This entailed polemic against those he opposed and a defence of the Gospel as he had preached it, supplemented by argument and 'proof' to support it. All this is found in the letter to the Galatians, together with the warning against going to the opposite extreme to 'bondage under the law', that of anti-nomism and misuse of Christian freedom for licentiousness.

In a forensic apology, the main emphasis is on the negating of what has been put forward by the opposing faction. As W. Scheidermeyer<sup>9</sup> is quick to note in his discussion of 'Galatians as Literature', a

first reading of Galatians reveals a militant and angry tone with bitter words (1:6; 3:1; 4:11.) and curses (1:8; 5:12.). The epistle is permeated with negative reactions and refutation, the overall impression being one of violent denunciation - 'To read it is to endure a sustained scolding'. <sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, this impression of emotional outburst and angry indignation must be balanced by the fact that Galatians is well-ordered and carefully constructed to produce a reasoned apologia in the face of opposition. Professor H. D. Betz describes the letter to Galatia as Paul's 'reaction cast in the form of an apology by letter, carefully composed according to the rules and conventions of Hellenistic epistolography and rhetoric'. <sup>11</sup> In a further article 'In Defence of the Spirit', <sup>12</sup> Professor Betz writes: "Paul's letter contains a defence of his version of the Gospel addressed to his churches in Galatia. To this degree it is an inner-Christian 'apology', or an apology within the Pauline cluster of churches. However, since Paul's Jewish-Christian opponents have almost succeeded in winning the Galatians over to their side, which is also the side of Judaism, the apostle's defence amounts to a defence of his theology before the forum of <sup>d</sup>Judaism. On the other hand, since the Galatians were pagans before becoming Christians, Paul's defence is at the same time a defence before the forum of paganism. In this sense his letter is apologetic. He must show the Christian Galatians why they should remain within the Pauline form of Christianity. This means that he must answer two questions, why they should not become Jewish Christians (= Jews), and, by implication, why they should not revert to paganism. He must demonstrate that it is more reasonable to become and remain a Christian of the Pauline variety .... such a situation necessitates

apologetics." <sup>13</sup>

In surveying the strategy adopted by Paul in his defence, Professor Betz maintains that the first main part of the letter (narratio) demonstrates that Paul's mission to the Gentiles was part of the consistent evolution of the church, beginning with his own call and conversion by Christ himself (1:12 - 2:14). By contrast, the opposition is pictured as 'sectarian', 'extremist', 'inconsistent', and 'dishonest' (cf. 2:4, 11;14). The main thrust of the 'argument' section (2:15 - 4:31) is to destroy the hope the Galatians had placed in the opponents' theology. Then in chapters 5 and 6 Paul sets out his own recommendations as to what the Galatians should do - to follow what Paul had taught, remaining 'free' yet under protection from ' '.

Given that the letter to the Galatians has this specific purpose, and an overall design in presenting Paul's case and disposing of that of his opponents, the letter may be seen to be carefully constructed accordingly so as to ensure its effectiveness.

The structure of Galatians has been variously discussed in the past. J. Bligh makes use of 'structural analysis' in his discussion of the letter and the complicated arrangement he finds within it based on the literary figure of 'Chiasmus'. <sup>14</sup> Bligh's analysis is too complex and laboured, but it does have the merit of retaining the unity and all-pervasive purpose of the letter, and also the notion that it is a carefully constructed composition.

In complete contrast to such an analysis, but equally complex, is the approach of J. C. O'Neill. <sup>15</sup> It is O'Neill's contention that Paul's original letter to the Galatians has been glossed and interpolated. He holds that Galatians as it now stands could not have been written by Paul as it is full of obscurities, contradictions,

and improbable remarks, but on the other hand he admits that the letter is too vital and compelling to have been written by a compiler. His answer therefore, is that 'Nobody but Paul could have written Galatians, yet the Galatians we possess is not entirely Paul's.' <sup>16</sup> O'Neill himself says 'I cannot hope to have been completely right at every point in assigning this verse to Paul, and that to a glossator, and the other to an interpolator'; and indeed this is the prime difficulty for any such attempt to break down the epistle to find glosses and additions to the text. The opposite approach, that of looking for a comprehensive structure and purpose for the epistle as a whole, explaining the text in the light of its intent and background, seems a far more constructive and productive approach in gaining some understanding of Paul's writing.

O'Neill admits that his analysis of Galatians is tentative and hypothetical but he defends it by arguing that 'The consistency of the picture of Paul's theology that emerges will be one test of the likelihood of the thesis'. <sup>17</sup> To this, one must object that Paul's thought and writing cannot be trimmed to produce the consistency or system that a commentator might wish to see; rather the Pauline letters show the complexities and difficulties which were encountered by Paul; he dealt with explosive situations with argumentation and discussion, debate from all angles, the meeting of objections, and forwarding of his own concepts in the process. Such a background to the letters cannot be denied, and given this then one cannot expect his letters to present a coherent, organised and systematic theology. The only way to understand Paul's writing is



to puzzle over the text, set it against what can be gleaned of its background and purpose, and look for explanation of its meaning - it is no answer simply to 'cut' out difficulties and seeming discrepancies. This type of approach is not helpful and cannot be proved at the present time, so what O'Neill himself suggests is surely the case: 'The exegete is tempted to wield the scalpel before he has exhausted less dramatic means of understanding the apparent disease'.<sup>18</sup>

It is Professor H. D. Betz's reconstruction of Galatians along rhetorical and epistolographic guidelines which comes nearest both to understanding the structure of the letter, and also does justice to the aim and intention of Paul in writing the letter to the Galatians.<sup>19</sup> Betz sees Galatians as an example of the 'apologetic letter genre' and he writes:

"The 'Apologetic Letter' presupposes the real or fictitious situation of the court of law, with the jury, the accuser and the defendant. In the case of Galatians, the addressees are identical with the jury, with Paul being the defendant, and his opponents the accusers. This situation makes Paul's letter a self-apology. The form of the letter is necessary, because the defendant himself is prevented from appearing in person before the jury, Therefore, the letter must serve to represent its author. Serving as a substitute, the letter carries the defence speech to the jury."<sup>20</sup>

Professor Betz begins his analysis of the composition of the letter by noting how easily the epistolary framework can be separated from the 'Body'; he comments that 'in fact, it separates so easily that it appears almost as a kind of external bracket for the body of the

letter' (1:1-5, 6:11-18). Betz then goes on to analyse the structure of the body of the letter in terms of rhetorical traditions for the presentation of an apology. <sup>21</sup>

Professor Betz identifies Galatians 1:6-11 as the introductory section. It includes the statement of the cause of the case, the discrediting of adversaries, and also expresses Paul's disappointment and disapproval of the Galatians for 'changing sides'. <sup>22</sup> Chapter 1, verses 10-11, are the transition to the narrative section. They deny that Paul is a rhetorical 'flatterer', persuading and pleasing men; and verse 11 then introduces Paul's own line of argument. <sup>23</sup>

Betz takes 1:12 - 2:14 as the narrative section; the 'facts' of the case are presented with a partisan bias in a 'lively and dramatic narrative, but there is no superfluous embellishment or ornament. The information given has no other purpose than to support the denial'. <sup>24</sup>

Professor Betz, noting that the narrative should end where the issue to be determined begins, says that 'it cannot be accidental that at the end of the narratio in Galatians 2:14, when Paul formulates the dilemma Cephas has got himself into, this dilemma is identical with the issue the Galatians themselves have to decide: *κῶς τὰ ἑνῇ ἀναγκάζει ἰουδαῖζειν* . <sup>25</sup>

This is an interesting suggestion, and the questioning form of 2:15 provides an effective transition to the proposition section of 2:15 - 21.

The proposition sums up the essential content of the narrative section, and sets up the arguments that are to be discussed in the 'proof' section of the defence which is to come.

The most important and decisive part of the defence is the 'proof' section (the 'probatio' or 'confirmatio') which Betz identifies as chapter 3:1 - 4:31. This section must establish credibility for the defence by a system of arguments. Betz makes the comment that 'viewing Galatians from a rhetorical perspective suggests at once that chapters 3 and 4 must contain the 'probatio' section'. He goes on to say that 'an analysis of these chapters in terms of rhetoric is extremely difficult. One might say that Paul has been very successful, as a skilled rhetorician would be expected to be, in disguising his argumentative strategy ..... what makes these chapters look so confusing is the frequent interruption of the argumentative sections by dialogue, examples, proverbs, quotations etc.' <sup>26</sup> Professor Betz says that this is in fact in line with the requirements of hellenistic rhetoric, for it is the presentation of the arguments in a 'lively' way.

In opening the 'proof' section Paul is said to make full use of the fact that the addressees of the letter were also the eye-witnesses of the evidence, for in 3:1-5 the 'inductive method' of argumentation is applied - the interrogation of witnesses which produces the strongest of all possible defence arguments - undeniable evidence. <sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the evidence is the gift of the spirit, so it is of supernatural origin and character which is evidence of the highest order.

Professor Betz goes on to note that the 'interrogatio' (3:1-5) prepares the ground for the next major argument - that from scripture (3:6ff). This type of argumentation is derived from Jewish apologetic traditions, but would be equal to the 'inartificial' proof of the

rhetorical systems.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the passage Galatians 3:6 - 18 is not merely scriptural proof, but according to Professor Betz, Paul concludes the 'Proof' section with the allegory of Sarah and Hagar (4:21 - 31). His explanation for the position and intention of this allegorical passage is that, 'Paul had concluded the previous section in 4:20 with a confession of perplexity - (... ὅτι ἀπορῶμαι ἐν ὑμῖν ). Such a confession was a rhetorical device, seemingly admitting that all previous arguments have failed to convince. Then, in 4:21 he starts again by asking the Galatians to tell the answer themselves: *λέγετέ μοι, ... τὸν νόμον οὐκ ἀκούετε* ; in other words, the allegory allows Paul to return to the 'interrogatio' method used in 3:1-5 ... Through the allegory he lets the Galatians find the 'truth' for themselves, thus convincing themselves ...".<sup>29</sup>

This analysis of Galatians along rhetorical guidelines is convincing and fits well with the aim of Paul's letter to the Galatians. Paul is defending his Gospel and his position as an apostle. The need for this defence is summed up by Professor Betz<sup>31</sup> thus:- "Paul's defence was his reaction to severe criticism .... Paul defends primarily his 'gospel without law'; that is the inclusion of the Gentiles .... without committing them to the Torah covenant. Such a defence must, of course, include Paul's self defence, because he is the one who claims to have been appointed by Christ himself to preach this Gospel and to convert the Gentiles. The defence must also assure the Galatians that, being Paulinists, they lack nothing, that they are full partakers of the divine salvation, and that their status outside the Torah is sufficient. This assurance must be accompanied by the thorough demolition of the theological position of the anti-Paulinist opposition".<sup>32</sup>

Professor Betz's structural analysis of the Letter to the Galatians,

and his explanation of Paul's need to write a forensic apology to Galatia are clear and convincing. My own analysis of the letter follows the same lines, but I have added some further suggestions to aid understanding of the composition of the letter.

The structure of the Letter to the Galatians is as follows:

- 1:1-5 - Epistolary Opening
- 1:6-10 - Introduction
- 1:11 - 2:15 - Narrative, statement of facts.
- 2:15 - 21 - Proposition
- 3:1 - 5:15 - Proof section
- 5:16 - 6:10 - Paraenesis
- 6:11 - end - Conclusion and postscript

This analysis agrees substantially with that of Professor Betz; but I would suggest further that the 'proposition' (2:15-21) plays a greater part in the formulation of the proof section, and may be seen to correspond thus:

Propositions		Proofs
2:15, 16	-	3:1 - 14
2:17 , 18	-	3:15 - 4:11
2:19, 20	-	4:12 - 31
2:21	-	5:1 - 15

If these can be seen to correspond, then the following propositions are backed up in the 'proof' sections. The proposition of 2:15, 16 is substantiated by the passage 3:1 - 14, where the argument turns on the spirit/flesh antithesis. The technique of questioning produces the desired effect of compelling the readers to agree with

the premise that they first received the spirit through faith, thereby supporting the suggestion that they have been 'bewitched' in that they are turning away. This line of argumentation is backed up with the further argument from scripture; the example of Abraham. A key verse is 3:7 - "know then that those of faith are the sons of Abraham - that is, that they are the true Jews. 3:10 - 12 then argues against any presentation of the law and its injunctions as being of any effect for salvation to Christians, returning to the main argument that faith is all important. The summary of this proof section, 3:14, includes all the key concepts into the one verse: "that the blessing of Abraham might come in Christ Jesus to the nations, that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith".

It can be seen clearly how the passage 3:1-14 supports the proposition laid down in 2:15, 16 that 'no flesh is justified by works of law'; positively explaining that Jews and Gentiles may be justified through faith in Christ, that all may thus be sons of Abraham'.

The proposition of 2:17, 18 is 'proved' by the arguments in the passage 3:15 - 4:11 where Paul argues that if a man makes an agreement then no one can break or add to it, and so it is with God and his dealings with men. God made the promise to Abraham and 'his seed which is Christ'; so this promise is not annulled by the Law - the Law was merely an intermediate measure, and has no effect now that the promise is fulfilled in Christ. The all-important element is now faith, 'for all are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus'.

In 4:1ff, the analogy of heir and slave is given to illustrate the notion of 4:3, that man was a slave in the world, but now he is saved through Christ. This reinforces the argument that nomism is no longer

applicable, and a positive proclamation of the Christian gospel is contained in 4:4 - 8.

The following verses rebuke the Galatians and combine with a refutation of those who persuaded them to go back to their old ways of slavery. Paul rounds off the argument with the emotional statement of verse 11.

These first two of the propositions combine to show that Jew and Gentile alike are justified by faith in Christ, and that faith is the criterion that counts<sup>n</sup> - to go back to legalism and distinctions such as Jew and Gentile, is to misrepresent the true Gospel of Christ.

The proposition of 2:19, 20 is taken up in 4:12 - 31. This 'proof' section is the most defensive and the most persuasive in terms of personal appeal and self-explanation. It expounds the Pauline version of the relation between sin - flesh and Law, and it also contains a specific refutation of the opponents in Galatia; Paul presenting his personal claims to be believed as against theirs (4:14ff). The emotion of verses 19 and 20 is intended to provoke the Galatians to self rebuke, and to listen now again to Paul.

The approach taken in this 'proof' section corresponds to the personal tone of the proposition in 2:19, 20; it serves to make the Galatians reach the conclusions that Paul desires of them, and leads on to the 'proof' of the final proposition (2:21) which is found in 5:1 - 15.

5:1-15 : This section repeats all that has been argued in no uncertain terms. It repudiates any positive claims for circumcision, pointing out only its 'old' implications of legalism and separation, and that it is of no use to the Christian who has received the spirit.

The confident statement of 5:10 underlines the argumentation with its note that the right way will be chosen; yet it is further backed up by verses 11-15, in which Paul dispels any possibility of remaining doubts with a positive exposition of his Gospel of Christian freedom. This leads on to the more general paraenetic section which follows.

Professor Betz designated 5:1 - 6:10 as the paraenetic section of the letter to the Galatians. He subdivides this into three parts, each one giving a restatement of what he calls the 'indicative' of salvation.<sup>32</sup>

In my own analysis of the letter, the paraenetic section only begins at 5:16; as the last proposition of 2:21 is well paralleled by 4:21 - 5:15 'proof' section. Moreover, the 'proof' passage (5:11 - 15) provides a bridge to the paraenetic section to follow, for from verse 13 Paul builds up a warning against misusing freedom as he presented in his Gospel, and thereby effectively excludes objections of the kind which claims that the concept of freedom leads only to licentiousness. This is reinforced by the practical advice then offered, and the exhortation to the Galatian Christians, revolving around the proposition 'by love serve one another'.

The paraenetic section, therefore, presents the positive Christian notion of what it means 'to walk by the spirit, and you will in no way fulfil the desires of the flesh' (5:16). The two opposing ways are described in 5:17 - 26, and then well illustrated with practical examples. This paraenesis is the didactic part of the letter, and it includes some traditional paraenetic content - for example, lists of vices and virtues (5:19 - 25), and the more specifically Christian directives (6:1ff), which make use of the



phrases, 'law of Christ' (6:2), 'household of faith' (6:10).

The paraenetic section beginning at 5:16 sets out two themes: positive and negative, on which the section builds and serves to round off the defence with an appeal to accept what has been argued there and to act on it. That is, to accept that the spirit was given through faith in Christ, making the law and the 'old' ways obsolete; that to live by the spirit is the 'new' way, and the key notion of this new life is 'love' (5:13ff, 5:22).

The conclusion of the letter as a whole and the epistolary closing are contained in 6:11 to the end. A last 'ethical' appeal for sympathy is found in verse 17 leaving a lasting impression of concern and sincerity.

Chapter 7. Notes - Paul's Letter to the Galatians

1. H. D. Betz - 'The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians'.  
N. T. S. 21. pages 253 - 379)
2. J. B. Lightfoot - Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul . 1895
3. J. B. Lightfoot op.cit. page 63
4. J. Bligh - Commentary on Galatians. London 1969
5. J. Bligh op. cit.
6. Robert Jewett - The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation  
N.T.S. 17. pp. 198ff
7. See Chapter 9
8. J. Bligh op.cit. Page 19
9. W. Schneidermeyer - 'Galatians as Literature'  
(Journel of Religious Thought. Vol. 28. 1971. pp. 132-8)
10. W. Schneidermeyer op.cit. page 136
11. H. D. Betz - 'Spirit, Freedom, and the Law'  
(Sv. Exegetisk Arsbock 1974. pp. 145-160) Page 155
12. H. D. Betz - In Defence of the Spirit in Aspects of Religious  
Propaganda in Judaism and early Christianity  
ed. Elizabeth Shussler - Fiorenza 1976
13. H. D. Betz - op cit. page 102
14. See J. Bligh. op.cit. pages 37-42
15. J. C. O'Neill - The Recovery of Paul's Letter to the Galatians  
S.P.C.K. 1972
16. J. C. O'Neill - op.cit. page 8
17. J. C. O'Neill - op.cit. pages 8ff
18. J. C. O'Neill - op.cit. page 84
19. H. D. Betz - The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians  
(N.T.S. 21. pages 253-379)
20. H. D. Betz (N.T.S.) op.cit. page 377

## 21. Betz's analysis of Galatians:

- |           |              |                |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| 1:6-11    | - Exordium   | (introduction) |
| 1:10-11   | - Transitus  | (Transition)   |
| 1:12-2:14 | - Narratio   | (Narrative)    |
| 2:15-21   | - Propositio | (Proposition)  |
| 3:1-4:31  | - Probatio   | (Proof)        |
| 5:1-6:10  | - Paraenesis |                |

22. Betz - op.cit. page 359

23. Betz - op.cit. page 362

24. Betz - op.cit. page 366

25. Betz - op.cit. page 367

26. Betz - op.cit. page 369

27. Betz - op.cit. page 370

28. Betz - op.cit. page 370

29. Betz - op.cit. page 371

30. Betz - op.cit. page 374

31. Betz - op.cit. page 375

32. H. D. Betz - Spirit, Freedom and the Law

(Sv. Exegetisk Arsbok 1974 pp. 145-160) Pages 145-7

Betz maintains that Paul's defence is of the spirit which is given by Paul in the following ways: (1) First argument - reference to indisputable evidence - 3:1-5; The Galatians own experiences make them first-hand witnesses of the case, an advantage which Paul exploits.

(2) The argument of historical consistency - most forcibly presented in the narration section (1:12 - 2:14) and also in the argumentatio section (Chapters 3 and 4)

(3) Proof from scripture, especially presented in Chapters 3 and 4.

(4) A whole series of negative arguments to demolish the theological position of his opponents: lack of evidence, historical inconsistency, and again, proof from scripture.

(5) Final argument - ethical exhortations in Chapters 5 and 6 - summed up in the paradoxical 5:25.

33. H. D. Betz - (n. T. S.) op.cit. pages 276ff

Chapter 8Paul's Corinthian Correspondence1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians is a difficult letter for which to find a concise, structural framework, and any attempt to find one is hampered by the fact that the integrity of the letter has been seriously questioned. 1 Corinthians is primarily deliberative in nature, in that Paul wants to persuade the Corinthians% to follow his advice on Christian living and doctrine. He answers questions posed by the Corinthians, ironing out doubts and explaining his reasons for what he is advocating to them.

Robertson and Plummer <sup>1</sup> rightly point out that 'the first epistle to the Corinthians is not, like Romans, a doctrinal treatise, nor is it, like Galatians, the document of a crisis involving far reaching doctrinal consequences. It deals with the practical questions affecting the life of a church founded by the writer'. Professor Barrett <sup>2</sup> notes that 'the practical advice, however, is consciously grounded in theological principles which can usually be detected; and more important, the problems with which Paul deals seem to have reacted upon his theological views, or at least to have had a catalytic effect in pushing forward developments that might otherwise have taken place more slowly'.

In deliberative discourse the authority of the speaker, the 'ethical appeal' is of supreme importance. Paul shows that he is well aware of this in 1 Corinthians, where he establishes his apostolic authority in a positive way throughout, for in 1 Corinthians Paul takes advantage of the authority he claims to add weight to his directions and arguments

(see Chapter 9). In 1 Corinthians, Paul is generally able to take for granted his position as an 'apostle of Christ'.

In Paul's view the Corinthians are at fault in moving towards what he considers to be a wrong view of Christianity and its meaning; thus he constantly 'corrects' them in the course of the letter, as well as persuading them that his position is the right one. Robertson and Plummer say that 'in our epistle the apostle, in asserting and defending his apostolic status and mission, never for a moment vacates his position of unquestionable authority, nor betrays a doubt as to his readers' acceptance of it'.<sup>3</sup>

In 1 Corinthians, then, we see Paul exerting the ethical form of appeal by upholding his apostolic authority, and using it positively to support his advice and 'deliberation' to the Corinthian church.

In deliberative speaking the aim is to convince the audience that what is being commended is right, and this can best be achieved by showing that it is in accord with the audience's own ideas; so we see Paul appealing to the Corinthians' own understanding and 'wisdom'. "Judge for yourselves", (10:15; 11:13) he says; and in persuading them to his way of thinking, the audience feel they have reached the conclusion through their own reasoning.

The integrity of 1 Corinthians has been questioned, and commentators have pointed out breaks in the flow of the thought in the letter, and differences in the situation presupposed by the letter.<sup>4</sup>

The contradictions within 1 Corinthians that J. Hering finds, have led him to divide it into two distinct letters,<sup>5</sup> which he contends make 'coherent letters'. Indeed they do, but then so do other, different

attempts at dividing 1 Corinthians.

H. Conzelmann,<sup>6</sup> after reviewing several attempts at reconstructing the 'Corinthian Correspondence', comes to the conclusion that, 'there is no conclusive proof of different situations within 1 Corinthians. The existing breaks can be explained from the circumstances of its composition. Even the complex that gives the strongest offence, chapters 8 - 10, can be understood as a unity.

An attractive discussion of the 'Corinthian correspondence', and one which retains the essential unity of 1 Corinthians, is that of J. C. Hurd Jr.<sup>7</sup> The presupposition that lies behind Hurd's study is his belief that exchanges behind our 1 Corinthians can be reconstructed with some clarity. Hurd argues that certain passages in 1 Corinthians are direct answers to specific questions put to Paul in a letter from Corinth; and it is from these supposed answers that Hurd believes he is able to construct the Corinthians' questions.

Hurd postulates the following stages of communication between Paul and Corinth:

- Paul visits Corinth and founds the Church
- 'Previous' letter by Paul
- Letter from Corinth received by Paul plus oral information
- Our 1 Corinthians in answer to questions posed and information received, modifying the position of the previous letter.

Hurd argues that the Corinthians had kept to Paul's original preaching, so they were puzzled when they received the 'previous' letter which marked a radical change. Hurd postulates that this 'previous' letter was written to commend the Apostolic Decree, and especially the provisions on immorality and idolatry. The Corinthians questioned Paul, in their own letter, about changes between Paul's original

preaching and that of the 'previous' letter, and in answer Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, stating a position of compromise.

Hurd's study is a comprehensive and in many ways, reasonable argument; but there are many detailed conclusions laid on doubtful foundations. For example, Paul's supposed use of the Apostolic Decree is pure supposition, and though it may fit well with the sections Hurd picks out from 1 Corinthians, it does not fit in well with Paul's non-usage of it anywhere else in his letters. If, as Hurd suggests, Paul had sent the 'previous' letter to uphold the Apostolic Decree of Acts 15, then why doesn't he explain this in the 'compromise' letter, for this would be an obvious 'way out' for Paul to be able to say this had not been his own directive but that of the Jerusalem council.

Hurd's study does show that the letter as we have it can be taken as a whole and understood without breaking it down into several different letters. 1 Corinthians can and should be read as a unity in the absence of any sound evidence to substantiate an opposite view.

Professor Barrett says that 'the essential question that must be asked and answered is whether 1 Corinthians makes sense in its present form, or is so manifestly inconsistent with itself that its illogical movement and internal contradictions can be remedied only by separating the discordant parts into different letters written on different occasions'.<sup>8</sup>

Professor Barrett goes on to say that it 'seems more probable ... that Paul simply wrote the letter through, beginning with Chapter 1 and finishing with Chapter 16'.<sup>9</sup> Accepting the unity of 1 Corinthians, it is now possible to move on to some consideration of the purpose and structure of the Letter. Much discussion about 1 Corinthians has centered on the identification of the various groups mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:12, and the situation in Corinth as may be gleaned

from the letter.

An example of an attempt to identify the individual groups is that, on the basis of Gal. 2:11ff, supporters of Peter were the representatives of Jewish Christianity that made appeal to the original apostles;<sup>10</sup> and on the basis of Acts 18:24 and 1 Corinthians 1:18, that which views Apollos as the representative of a kind of Christianity that developed rhetoric and demanded wisdom - a sort of Alexandrian, gnostic-type Christian interpretation.

There have been various theories put forward concerning the so called 'Christ Group' in Corinth. Different interpretations view this group as a radical Jewish Christian group (F. C. Baur), libertine gnostics (W. Schmithals), or a group of those in opposition to the Petrine group (G. K. Barrett).

A recent interpretation of the situation behind 1 Corinthians, has been suggested by Professor K. Grayston. According to Grayston the leaders, Paul, Apollos, Cephas and Christ, are named as the supposed originators and promoters of two divergent positions: Paul as the originator and Apollos as promoter of 'gnosis'; Christ as the author and Peter the preserver of the 'logos' - the tradition of his instructions. Paul does not accept this view as it would make him a rival of Christ, and he argues for unity, not dissension.<sup>11</sup>

Some commentators have disputed the basic notion behind the various attempts at identifying the groups in Corinth, that there was any distinct factionalism in Corinth at all. J. Munck holds that there were neither 'parties' nor 'Judaisers' at Corinth. The trouble was caused by the Corinthians' misunderstanding Christianity as wisdom; they took the Christian teachers to be teachers of wisdom, and themselves as wise, and this made a cause for 'boasting' which Paul has to contest.



Nils A. Dahl<sup>13</sup> maintains that there were some persons whom Paul regards as arrogant in Corinth, and he is aware of some opposition to him, which was caused by the Corinthians' assumption that Paul would not return.<sup>14</sup> Dahl says that Paul's 'one aim' was to 'reestablish his authority as an apostle and spiritual father of the church at Corinth.'<sup>15</sup> I cannot agree that this was the 'one' aim of 1 Corinthians, but varied though the many commentaries on 1 Corinthians are, they have in common the notion that Paul must establish and hold his authority as apostle if his instructions are to carry the necessary weight and be accepted by the whole Corinthian community.

Paul conveys this through the letter which is written along the lines of a 'deliberative discourse' which may be analysed thus:

- 1 Corinthians 1:1-3 - Letter opening
- 1:4-9 - Thanksgiving
- 1:10-4:21 - Introduction
- 5:1-15:57 - Deliberation
- 15:58 - Conclusion
- 16:1-12 - Information
- 16:13-24 - Final Greetings

1:1-3 - Letter Opening

1:4-9 - Thanksgiving

1:10-4:21 - Functions as the 'Introduction' and 'Narrative'.

This section sets the scene for the deliberation, states the case, establishing the basis of ethical appeal - the authority and worthiness of the speaker, counters alternative views that may be forwarded: in all respects, prepares the way for the deliberative content that follows, ensuring its favourable reception.

The introductory phrase, "I exhort you", is a key one in understanding the purpose of 1 Corinthians. Paul is not here giving a forensic defence of a particular view in the face of specific allegations as in Galatians; nor is he presenting a deliberative exposition of his own understanding of the Gospel as in Romans; rather, here in 1 Corinthians, Paul aims to correct mistaken interpretations of the Christian message, to persuade the corinthians to accept his direction and advice on particular problems, and to explain to them further his interpretation and understanding of the Christian Gospel and the practical implications of this in the everyday life of the Christian.

In the Introduction, Paul sets the scene, all the time conscious of expanding the ethical appeal by enhancing his own position in the eyes of his readers (2:1-5); countering mistaken views of the situation (1:17-30), rebuking them for mistaken actions (3:1-4), and correcting their understanding (3:4-22).

In 4:1-16, Paul expounds his understanding of apostleship and all that it entails, countering the false views held by some 'enthusiastic' Corinthians, and ending in verse 16 with the appeal for them to be imitators of him; that is, to follow and adhere to the presentation of Christian Life he expounds.

In 4:17-21, we see Paul defending his actions in the face of some criticism levelled at him in Corinth. This section serves to enhance Paul's authoritative position in the deliberative content which follows.

#### 5:1 - 15:57 - The Deliberative Discourse

This main part of 1 Corinthians includes responses to reports received (chapters 5, 6) which criticise actions taken, explains why, and advises for the future. Paul also answers questions that have been

raised concerning the practical implications of Christian faith for life in everyday situations.

Paul answers questions and doubts, gives advice on problems, corrects wrong ways of understanding situations, gives reasons and explains the right interpretations to be followed. He persuades the readers that the way he advises is the right one.

In the course of his arguments and exposition, Paul appeals to the authority of the scriptures which he quotes (e.g. 1:19), works into his own formulations (14:21; 15:25, 27), expounds (9:9ff), expounds (15:45), and uses in a Midrashic way (10:1). Paul also uses the authoritative power of a 'word of Jesus' (7:10), and 'example of the Lord' (11:1).

Alongside this scriptural support for his arguments, Paul also employs more ~~of~~ 'Greek' appeal in his use of set forms of paraenesis, such as catalogues of virtues and vices, or cosmological ideas (11:2ff), or proverbial maxims (5:6). Paul also claims support from experience or convention (10:15, 11:13).

15:58 - Conclusion

Chapter 16 - Information, and 16:13-24, the Final Greetings.

Chapter 8. Notes - Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

(1 Corinthians)

1. Robertson and Plummer - A Critical and Exegetical commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.  
I. C. C. 1914. page xxxiv
2. C. K. Barrett - The First Epistle to the Corinthians  
Black's N.T. Commentaries 1968
3. Robertson and Plummer - op.cit. page xivi
4. For example, it has been said that 10:1-22 fits badly into its context, and that by removing it we are left with a unified complex of thought. Similarly chapter 13 is said to interrupt the continuity between chapters 12 and 14.

In 1:10ff Paul is said to be better informed about conditions in Corinth than in 11:18; and it has been argued that the latter section belongs to an earlier letter. Similarly, whereas in chapter 9 Paul has to defend his standing as an apostle, in chapters 1-4 there is no trace of this.

5. J. Héring - The first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. 1962  
The two letters : (1) 1-8; 10:23 - 11:1; 16:1-4, 10-14  
(2) 9; 10:1-22; 11-15; rest of 16
6. H. Conzelmann - Commentary on Corinthians  
Hermeneia. Fortress Press. 1975. Page 4
7. J. C. Hurd Jr. - The Origin of 1 Corinthians - 1965
8. C. K. Barrett - op.cit. pages 14-15
9. C. K. Barrett - op. cit page 15
10. C. K. Barrett - Cephas and Corinth in Abraham unser vater -  
Festschrift für Otto Michel. (by O. Betz, M. Hengel, P. Schmidt)  
1963. pages 1-12
11. K. Grayston - Not with a Rod  
Expos. Times 88 (1 '78) 13-16
12. J. Munck - Church without Factions in Paul and the Salvation of Mankind. 1959 pp. 135ff
13. Nils A. Dahl - Paul and the Church at Corinth according to 1 Corinthians 1:10 - 4:21 in Studies for J. Knox. page 313ff
14. Nils A Dahl. op.cit. Page 319
15. Nils A Dahl. op.cit. Page 321

2 Corinthians

In 2 Corinthians Paul struggles against sharp attacks on himself and his apostolic status. He seeks to rebuff these attacks by defence and counter-attack.<sup>1</sup>

In Galatia Paul had claimed his independence from the Jerusalem apostolate, and in 2 Corinthians this very point is used against him, the opponents producing letters of recommendation originating from Jerusalem, and seeking to discredit Paul, questioning his status as a legitimate apostle.

In order to analyse the structure of 2 Corinthians, consideration must first be given to those doubts raised concerning the integrity of the letter as it stands. Problems about the unity of 2 Corinthians are generally recognised, but no solution has been generally accepted.

Doubts about the integrity of our 2 Corinthians centre on three main questions. Can chapters 10-13 belong to the same letter as chapters 1-9 in view of the fact that the tone in which Paul addresses the community in the two parts seems so different? Can chapters 1-9 be a unity, for chapter 2:14 - 7:4 interrupts the story of Titus' return? Can chapters 8 and 9 belong together for both treat the theme of the 'Collection' with no clear reference to one another? Any attempt to find an overall pattern or structure in 2 Corinthians must take into account these three areas of debate concerning the integrity of the letter as we have it.

The question whether chapters 1-9 and 10-13 could have been parts of the same letter, turns on the fact that, at first sight, the two sections show very different stances of Paul in his relation of the community.

G. Bornkamm maintains that chapters 10-13 are a fragment of a letter sent 'out of much affliction and anguish of the heart with many tears' (2:4). Bornkamm bases his conclusion on the fact that chapters 10-13 show Paul fighting hard against opponents, with nothing to suggest that the conflict within the congregation had been settled as he claims is the situation behind chapters 1. 2 and 7.<sup>3</sup>

The 'tearful letter' was written after a short visit and an unpleasant episode in Corinth, and an objection to Bornkamm's conclusion that chapters 10-13 are part of the 'tearful letter' is that nowhere in chapters 10-13 is the episode which occasioned the letter, mentioned. Similarly, nowhere in chapters 2 and 7 are the opponents mentioned who are inveighed against in chapters 10-13.

It is questionable also, whether, as Bornkamm suggests, chapters 1-7 assume a situation in Corinth where everything is normal. In fact these chapters contain defensive stands against misinterpretation; for example, of Paul's behaviour,<sup>4</sup> they also have a polemical content,<sup>5</sup> showing a situation which is far from harmonious. James L. Price<sup>6</sup> makes the point that: 'since it is usual to comment upon the 'bitter irony' of Paul's words in chapters 9-13, it may be pertinent to observe that he begins with a positive entreaty. It would be false to exaggerate the pleading, irenic qualities of some of Paul's appeals in chapters 10-13, in which one finds a torrent of angry accusations, biting sarcasm and warnings - as false as to ignore the defensive, more mildly sarcastic thrusts in the predominantly conciliatory and complimentary passages in 1-7'.

A further doubt which may be raised against Bornkamm's thesis that chapters 10-13 are a part of the 'tearful letter', concerns the possible reasons for its position in 2 Corinthians as we have it.

Bornkamm himself raises this doubt in pointing to the difficulties surrounding any reconstruction of 2 Corinthians. He writes - 'It is clear that every literary analysis remains a vague attempt so long as the reasons may not be advanced or convincingly stated why a later collator came to compose the letter as a whole. Thus, against every hypothesis of this nature the critical question must be asked: is it at all conceivable that an editor set various Pauline letters in such an unusual order or disorder?' <sup>7</sup>

Bornkamm accounts for the attachment of chapters 10-13 to the end of the letter on the grounds of the literary convention of placing at the end of the text, a warning about heretics. <sup>8</sup>

Even if it is accepted that there was such a literary convention in the early Church's writings; against Bornkamm's adducing this as proof of an editor's hand at work, it must be asked that as Paul generally concluded his letters with a final polemic against false prophets, then why must chapters 10-13 be taken to have been added by a later editor, and not simply as the work of Paul himself in concluding the composition of 2 Corinthians?

A more attractive thesis is put forward by Professor Barrett in his article 'Titus' <sup>9</sup>. He uses the references in 2 Corinthians to Titus to reconstruct the historical background behind the letter(s). Professor Barrett's reconstruction of events behind 2 Corinthians is as follows. During Paul's second visit to Corinth he encountered some personal opposition and was insulted (2 Cor. 2:5). Because of this Paul did not visit Corinth again but sent Titus with the 'tearful letter' (which has been lost). After receiving good news from Titus, Paul sent the letter back to Corinth to complete the collection and

carrying a further letter, 2 Cor. 1-9. Only later when Titus returned to Paul with bad reports of the situation in Corinth, did Paul write chapters 10-13 in response to the changed situation.

The advantages of this reconstruction of events by Professor Barrett, is that it retains the present order of 2 Corinthians as we have it, and disposes of the view that chapters 10-13 could be the 'tearful' letter. Professor Barrett does accept the separation of chapters 10-13 from chapters 1-9, but they are placed in a context of further developments in Corinth - rather than rearranging the whole sequence of events as Bornkamm envisaged.

This argument is supported further in a more recent article by Professor Barrett <sup>10</sup> where he looks at the references to the man who caused pain (2 Cor. 2:5ff), and those to the incident (2 Cor. 7:12) which 'poisoned the relations between Paul and the Corinthians', <sup>11</sup> and shows how these allusions can throw light on the situation which developed in Corinth and is reflected in Chapters 10-13. <sup>11</sup>

In considering the question of whether chapters 1-9 and 10-13 are part of the same letter, W. G. Kümmel notes that, 'the assumption that 10-13 belongs <sup>to</sup> a letter later than 1-9 or is the 'intermediate letter' earlier than 1-9 both require the additional supposition that the end of letter 1-9 and the beginning of letter 10-13 were broken off - and for this no plausible explanation can be offered'. Kümmel goes on to suggest that, 'it is not inconceivable that Paul, after a certain lapse of time, added a conclusion to his letter in which he expressed more sharply his present concerns about the community'. <sup>12</sup>

This position is close to that which I will outline below viewing 2 Corinthians as a unity, and chapters 10-13 forming an integral part



of the structure and apologetic intent of the letter; while Professor Barrett's historical reconstruction of the developing situation in Corinth is accepted as the background of 2 Corinthians.

The second major doubt concerning the integrity of 2 Corinthians is whether the unity of chapters 1-9 can be upheld, for 2:14 - 7:4 has long been considered an interruption in its present context. The narrative of events concerning Titus is broken, then resumed again in 7:5, and this has led some commentators to see 2:14 - 7:4 as a fragment interpolated from a different letter.

The situation envisaged in 2:14 - 7:4 may reflect an earlier time than chapters 10:13, but extracting it from its present position in 2 Corinthians is not so easily endorsed. There is no doubt that 2:14 - 7:4 does interrupt the report of Titus' return from Corinth to meet Paul, but a convincing explanation as to why Paul digresses thus in 2:14 - 7:4 can be given, if it is recognised as a restating of Paul's position as he wrote it in the 'tearful' letter (see chapter 9).

The problem concerning chapters 8 and 9 is that in chapter 9 Paul takes up again the discussion of the arrangements for the collection after he had seemingly concluded his discussion of this.

On the other hand, it has been noted that 9:1ff is not a completely new beginning in discussing the collection, for 9:3, 5 refer back to 8:18ff. Similarly, the necessity of help for Jerusalem is not repeated, only the invitation to help more generously. Kümmel argues, therefore, that chapter 9 did not form a separate letter, rather that 'it is conceivable that Paul, after breaking off the theme resumed it once more, and gave it new urgency.'<sup>13</sup> The arguments in favour of breaking down 2 Corinthians into more than one letter are not convincing;

the difficulties they point to are not insurmountable, and the unity of 2 Corinthians can be upheld. A consideration of the opponents of Paul, and the background situation in Corinth is important in this respect.

A convincing case has been made for seeing the opponents as Judaising Christians, probably from Jerusalem (see chapter 9). Professor Barrett argues that the opponents were Judaising Christians who constituted a rival apostolate to Paul's. The Corinthians, therefore, had to compare the two and judge between them, and they tested them on hellenistic grounds by looking for powers and signs. <sup>14</sup>

D. W. Oostendorp argues that 2 Corinthians 3 confirms that the items mentioned in 11:4, 'another Jesus, another Spirit, another Gospel', were the three main items discussed throughout 2 Corinthians. <sup>15</sup> Oostendorp maintains that the opponents came to Corinth as apostles (11:5, 13; 12:11) to preach their Gospel that can be 'fittingly characterised as 'judaising' for in it they preached the superiority of Israel'. <sup>16</sup>

The comparison between the opponents and Paul can be seen throughout 2 Corinthians - the background situation is basically the same, the difference being one of the degree of opposition to Paul. In this chapter I have attempted to find an overall structure of the letter, contributing to the case that 2 Corinthians forms an originally unified letter.

2 Corinthians as a whole is viewed as an apology - a personal defence on Paul's part of his past conduct and his principles - if this is so then the letter can be analysed and be seen to follow rhetorical

guidelines for the apologetic composition.

Chapters 1-9 are to be understood as a reiteration of previous exchanges -- i.e. as the 'narrative' section of the apology, and thus the differing parts of this section can be explained. The problem section, 2:14 - 7:4, would then be a restatement from a previous apology of a deliberative nature which had dealt with a specific problem of that earlier time, but included much of the material and stance Paul still maintains, and a warning that was not heeded in view of the developed situation now being dealt with.

This explanation means that 2:14 - 7:4 is an integral part within an overall structure, not simply a fragment added by a later editor or compiler. It is part of the narrative section of the defence, presenting the 'facts' of the case in hand; it had a positive function within the letter as written by Paul in defence of his past actions and recommendations. It serves to give the previous history of the situation at Corinth, illustrating Paul's consistency in his assertions, and it shows how Paul had previously warned the Corinthians against being 'deceived', as they were in the end.

This view of chapters 1-9 not only offers a way of viewing the situation in a new way, it also excludes the problem of sharp breaks which had led to the splitting up of the letter. It also does away with a problem over the repetitiveness within the letter as a whole, for 10-13 are the 'proof' section establishing and supporting what has gone before; and explains the vehemence of these chapters and the need to make use of every possible technique and device to persuade the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians may in fact be seen as a unified composition, a forensic defence of Paul against personal attack and misrepresentation of his

motives, honesty and preaching of the Gospel.

2 Corinthians	1:1-2	- Letter opening
	1:3-7	- Introduction
	1:8 - 9:15	- Narrative
	(2:14 - 7:4	- Digression, quoting an earlier apology)
	10:1-6	- Proposition
	10:7 - 12:19	- Proof and Refutation
	12:19 - 13:10	- Conclusion
	13:11 - end	- Exhortation and Letter closing

Paul adapts the apologetic structure to his own purpose; the 'facts' of the case are the central defence, he wants to show the Corinthians his consistency and love towards them, how he warned them and tried only to 'build up' the community.

The 'proof' section adds to the defence by way of adducing all the persuasive devices and techniques available to establish the case - e.g. ethical appeal, irony, parody, sarcasm, rational argument and emotional appeal.

## 2 Corinthians

1:1-2 Letter Opening

1:3-7 Introduction

The introductory tone is encouragement, to sustain support and loyalty that may be present in Corinth.

1:8 - 9:15 - Narrative

Paul says he is sure of success by plain speaking and defence of his

conduct (vii) - this is a typical opening in a defence; the speaker disclaims ability in speaking persuasively, he rather claims to speak with simplicity and sincerity.

1:13 - Paul states his reason for writing and his confidence in the result he aims for - the idea that the 'facts' will speak for themselves.

The narrative section, therefore, goes on to relate the circumstances which led up to the present situations. Paul refers back to the 'tearful' letter he had written to Corinth earlier. His reason for writing that letter had been to 'know the proof of you, if in everything you are obedient' - i.e. it was deliberative. Paul then describes his anxious wait for the return of Titus with news from Corinth about the effect the 'tearful' letter had had. Paul digresses in order to recapitulate the message sent to Corinth in that earlier letter (2:14 - 7:4).

On this view, 2:14 - 7:4 is not a fragment of another letter inserted here by a later editor, but Paul's own reworking of his earlier arguments into the present discourse. It serves to establish reasonable and forgiving attitude that he was adopting in that situation, thus building up the ethical appeal.

The extended reference (2:14ff) to that earlier letter's warning against Judaising opponents of Paul (see chapter 4) is then intended to show how Paul has been consistently right all along.

7:2-4 serves to sum up the point of this digression; it explains again the motives of Paul in earlier writing (c.f. 2:9-11), and then 7:5 resumes the historical narrative. The anxiety of Paul's wait for Titus is described again <sup>17</sup> and Paul repeats his grief at having had to

write it, but that he did<sup>not</sup> regret it because it had had the desired effect. 17

The narrative continues with the Corinthians behind Paul and the way open to resume the collection. Paul sends Titus back to complete this work, and the reassertion of the reasons for the collection in chapter 8 and 9 serves to illustrate further Paul's unselfish motives; an anticipation of defence to come against the charge of misuse of money ( 2 Cor. 12:18).

This account of the 'facts' of the case leads up to the explicit defence and refutation of the opposition in Corinth. The narrative is designed to wield both 'ethical' and 'emotional' appeal in its proclamation of Paul's pure motives and concern for the Corinthians. It is intended to 'prick the consciences' of the latter in their apparent rejection of Paul in favour of the 'false apostles'.

#### 10:1-6 - The Proposition

The propositions to be established : Paul's consistency, his insistence on the correct appearance of an apostle of Christ, the power of the Gospel to refute reasoning, and bring every thought into line with the 'meekness and gentleness' of Christ, and disobedience is avenged.

#### 10:7 - 12:19 - Proof and Refutation

The proof is offered, by argumentation and persuasive techniques, that all Paul has said and done in the past was the truth. Specific charges and attacks are refuted, and the Apostolic authority of Paul again propounded.

The argumentation has a sophisticated ring throughout the proof section - it conforms to Corinthians expectations of use of powerful invective and defence, the use of devices and techniques common in oratorical display - irony, parody, sarcasm etc.

H. D. Betz <sup>18</sup> regards 2 Cor. 10:1 - 13:10 as originally separate from the main body of the letter, but he does not identify it with the 'tearful' letter. Betz defines the literary mould in which Paul casts the attack on his obscure opponents, as an apology in letter form. Betz proposes that Paul's denial of formal apologetic and rhetorical technique (2 Cor. 12:19) continues a tradition that can be traced back to Socrates. Betz suggests that Paul wrote his defence in the manner of philosophical apologies to answer accusations of 'religious fraud'. Betz supports this with reference to 2 Cor. 12:12, and he compiles a catalogue of literary apologies against similar charges, and the thematic parallels Betz draws are impressive; for example, refusal to perform miracles in proof of status; <sup>19</sup> the claim that true wisdom requires poverty, <sup>20</sup> and eloquent disclaiming of rhetorical skills. <sup>21</sup>

It is Betz's contention that Paul in Corinth suffered the common fate of a prophet whose credentials had been ridiculed by rival missionaries, and was abused by such time-honoured hellenic terms of intellectual abuse as 'magician', 'sophist', 'imposter'. In discussing the parallels between the Greek comparative material he draws on in looking at 2 Cor. 10:13, Betz shows that the attack on Paul's feeble appearance and lack of oratorical vigour was conventional abuse; while the irony and parody employed by Paul in reply, were among the intellectual weapons that Paul found in contemporary rhetorical material. <sup>22</sup>

In his analysis of 2 Cor. 12:7-10, Betz maintains that the structure

of this passage imitates the narrative of a healing miracle expressed in style. Betz argues for the reduction of autobiographical value attached to these verses, for he considers the passage to be a clever parody of two well-known forms of religious propaganda that were valued by Paul's opponents - ecstatic raptures and healing miracles.<sup>23</sup>

#### 12:19 - 13:10 - Conclusion

The final appeal comes in the conclusion; verse 19 specifically mentions the 'defence' and claims that it is 'before God in Christ', effectively thereby claiming supernatural and authoritative witness. The usual elements of 'rhetorical' conclusions are present; the stating of motives, fear of the outcome, the corroborating of statements (c.f. 13:1-2), summing up the 'proofs' offering (13:3), persuasive appeal to decide (13:3ff), and finally the prayer for the success of the defence is presented (13:7).

The conclusion is effective in summing up the essential content of the defence, establishing the favour of the readers by creating sympathetic emotion, and an offer of conciliation.

#### 13:11 - end - Letter Ending

Exhortation and closing of Letter



Chapter 8. Notes - Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

(2 Corinthians)

1. See Chapter 9
2. G. Bornkamm - The History and Origin of the so-called 2nd letter to the Corinthians.  
N. T. S. 8. pp. 254-76
3. G. Bornkamm - op.cit. page 259
4. 1:13ff, 23ff, 4:2ff, 5:11ff, 7:2ff
5. 2:17ff; 3:1 c.f. 2:6
6. James L. Price - Aspects of Paul's Theology and their bearing on Literary Problems of Second Corinthians. in  
Studies in the History and Text of the New Testament for K. W. Clark  
- ed. by M. J. Suggs. 1967. Page 103
7. G. Bornkamm op.cit. page 261
8. G. Bornkamm op.cit. page 266
9. C. K. Barrett - 'Titus' in Neotestamentia et Semitica : studies in  
honour of Matthew Black - ed. by E. E. Ellis and M. Wilcox.  
pp. 1-14
10. C. K. Barrett - O'ADIKHEAE.  
(2 Cor. 7:12) in Verborum Veritas: Festschrift für Gustav Stählin,  
ed. O. Böcher and K. Haaker. 1970 pp. 149-57
11. C. K. Barrett op.cit page 149
12. W. G. Kümmel - Introduction to the New Testament  
Revised ed. 1975
13. W. G. Kümmel. op.cit. page 291
14. C. K. Barrett - Paul's Opponents in 2 Corinthians.  
N. T. S. 17 (3 '71) pp. 233-54
15. D. W. Oostendorp - Another Jesus : A Gospel of Jewish-Christian superiority in 2 Corinthians. 1967
16. D. W. Oostendorp - op.cit. Page 80  
(5:12, 16; 11:18, 20, 22)
17. The emotions described in 7:11 - 12 may be illustrative of the  
reaction provoked that caused the comment in 1 Cor. about the  
strength of Paul's letters.

18. H. D. Betz - Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition :  
Eine exegetische untersuchung zu seiner 'Apologie' 2 Korinthen 10-13.  
Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, 45. Tübingen : Mohr 1972

19. H. D. Betz op.cit. Page 72

20. H. D. Betz op.cit. Pages 100-102

21. H. D. Betz op.cit. Page 57-9

22. H. D. Betz op.cit. Page 78ff

For example - Paul's ironical effort to play the fool, a rhetorical pose which enables him to indulge in self-praise without damage to his integrity and gravity.

23. H. D. Betz - Eine Christus - Aretalogie bei Paulus. (2 Cor. 12:7-10)  
Zeit. Theol. Kirch. 66 (3 '69) 288 - 305

Chapter 9Paul's Personal Defence of his Apostleship

To call Paul's defence of his position and standing as an apostle a personal apology is something of a misnomer, for the defence of his apostleship is intimately bound up with his proclamation and apology for the Christian gospel as he understood and preached it. In the face of attacks on his personal position as an apostle, he has to defend not only his own standing, but also his gospel. Before the threat of a different interpretation of the Gospel, Paul defends both his teaching and his own apostolic standing and authority. For Paul, his status as an 'apostle of Christ' stands or falls with his proclamation of the 'Gospel of Christ'.

1 Corinthians shows clearly that Paul's teaching had been disputed; this meant that he had not only to clarify and expand that teaching, but also to clarify and defend his own authority so that he could make a positive appeal to it in support of his recommendations.

In Galatians also, the 'different Gospel' necessitated a defence of his apostolic office as the basis of authority for his Gospel, and this was made more difficult by his opponents in Galatia who had attacked his status as an apostle, for they knew that to attack Paul was to attack his Gospel.

Such attacks on Paul, whether personal or against his teaching, compelled him to defend his authoritative position, and this in turn necessitated a positive exposition of his concept of apostleship. This leads to the need for some consideration of the concept of apostleship in the early Christian church, in order to appreciate Paul's position in that context.

Paul's first step in defence of his apostolic status is the declaration that he was called by Christ himself to be 'apostle to the Gentiles'. Then he pointed to his honesty as a 'servant of Christ' which forbid him to seek, by untruthful means, to persuade men, or to speak for the sake of pleasing men (Gal. 1:10). In 2 Corinthians Paul's defence of his apostolic authority is mixed with a harsh and unrelenting polemic against opponents in Corinth, the 'ψευδοπροσβολου'. It is characteristic of Paul to argue from 'Gospel' to 'apostle' if he aims to explain and defend his being an apostle (e.g. Galatians), or from 'apostle to Gospel' if he aims to confirm the truth of his teaching (e.g. 1 Corinthians).

This chapter aims to investigate how Paul's defensive stand leads him to a positive exposition of his conception of being an apostle. It was not only in conflict that Paul formulated and expounded his views of apostleship, it was also against a background where there was more than one acceptable definition of an apostle. It is probably fair to say that whatever the understanding of what it was to be an apostle before Paul, after Paul this position was changed to take account of Paul's views.

It was J. B. Lightfoot<sup>1</sup> who threw doubt on what he calls the 'prevailing view' of his time, that the first institution of the office of the apostles - the twelve - was a limit that was strictly observed, an exception being made only in the case of Paul. Lightfoot challenges this, and he begins by surveying the use made of the word 'apostle' in the Gospels. He notes that those whom it is customary to designate the apostles are more often entitled the 'disciples' or the 'Twelve', and that where the word does occur it is not used to lend any countenance to the idea that it is restricted to the twelve.<sup>2</sup> Luke, however, uses

the word more frequently and states explicitly that the Lord gave this name to the Twelve (Luke 6:13), and in his Gospel it is a common designation for them. But Lightfoot goes on to note that Luke is not entirely consistent for he uses the word for both Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14). A study of Paul's ideas of apostleship in the Letters, leads Lightfoot to conclude that the evidence from the New Testament points to discounting the idea that the apostolate was limited to the Twelve.

Professor Barrett <sup>3</sup> notes that the twelve as a group never emerged as a missionary group, as is made clear by Acts and Galatians 2:7ff. Professor Barrett says that 'Luke's anxiety to represent the church in its mission to the world as the outcome of, and as continuous with, Jesus and his mission to Israel, leads him to tie down the notion of apostleship to the group of twelve whom he could describe as having been close disciples and companions of Jesus during his ministry, and to represent these twelve as responsible, through Peter, for initiating the Gentile mission (Acts 10:1-48), and collectively sanctioning and controlling it'. <sup>4</sup> This would explain why Acts shows little trace of the problems of the Gentile mission, and of the controversies between Paul and Jerusalem. Professor Barrett himself says that this is a little unfair to Luke, but it does amply illustrate that the concept of apostleship that is found in Acts was probably not representative of the current one in Paul's day. Paul's view in fact was rather different, and was formed against a background of struggle and controversy. <sup>5</sup>

K. H. Rengstorff <sup>6</sup> sees the origins of the term 'apostle' in a seafaring word which was used generally to convey the idea of 'being sent'. But he finds a more useful guide for the background of apostolos in the

Jewish 'shaliah'. The 'sheluhim' carried commissions which involved responsibility, but it is the missionary element which differentiates New Testament apostleship from the Jewish 'shaliah'. Two important points follow from this approach; that the apostle's worth lay not in himself but in him who sent him, and that the chief work of an apostle was to carry and proclaim the message. <sup>7</sup>

W. Schithals <sup>8</sup> makes the point that apostles are always missionaries, but that not all missionaries are apostles. <sup>9</sup>

Professor Barrett <sup>10</sup> says that we should distinguish between three main groups in Jerusalem at the time of Paul's conversion : the three 'pillars', the twelve, and a group of apostles who would perhaps not always reside in Jerusalem. In the course of time the twelve tended to leave the picture, leaving the three 'pillars' who were aided by others. Professor Barrett points to Galatians 2:12 as proof that James had envoys who travelled at least as far as Antioch; and Acts 15:22ff describes those who conveyed the apostolic letter and decree from Jerusalem to the churches of Syria and Cilicia. He says that it was such envoys who were unsettling the Galatian churches (Galatians 1:7), and that they were also the 'false apostles' condemned by Paul in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Professor Barrett makes the further point that both in Galatia and Corinth (2 Corinthians), Paul's problem in dealing with these 'false apostles' is sharpened because they may have some backing from the Jerusalem authorities. <sup>11</sup>

H. Mosbech in his article 'Apostolos in the New Testament' <sup>12</sup> argues that being regarded as a legitimate apostle was not important to Paul until he came into conflict with Judaisers. He points to the Thessalonian letters in support of this, where in the prescript Paul

simply writes 'Paul', whereas in later epistles after controversy with Judaisers, he calls himself, with some variations, 'Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ'.

This comment of Mosbech's supports a thesis put forward by R. Schnackenburg,<sup>13</sup> who says that Paul encountered differing conceptions of 'apostle' in the early church: the more general use to denote a missionary in the Hellenistic mission field, and the more restricted use of the term emanating from Jerusalem. It is Schnackenburg's argument that, 'at the beginning the concept of an apostle was not carefully defined. Paul had to safeguard against those who contested his apostleship (from different viewpoints), so that he faced all the requirements - the ones which came from the 'apostles before him' in Jerusalem, as well as those which were presented by the 'apostles during his time', and in this he clarified his own understanding of his ministry as an apostle'.<sup>14</sup>

A rather different angle is covered by J. H. Schutz in his work, 'Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority',<sup>15</sup> for Schütz is mainly concerned with how Paul envisages his apostolic task, and how he construes that authority which his letters seek to express.<sup>16</sup> Paul's letters reflect a situation in which the Christian apostle was already something of an authoritative figure. When Paul feels called on to explain his claim to apostleship he implicitly justifies his claim to authority at the same time - the authority behind his letters is the authority behind Paul's apostolic claim. This brings us back to the initial notion that when Paul defends his apostolic office he is also defending his Gospel and vice versa. The point is also now well made, that it is in times of controversy that Paul expounds his ideas of apostleship, arising from the fact of his having to defend his authority and his teaching in the

face of opposition. The two letters where Paul has to explain his concept of apostleship in the face of attack are Galatians and 2 Corinthians, while in 1 Corinthians Paul uses his apostolic authority as the basis and support of his teaching.

### Galatians

At the beginning of the letter to the Galatians, Paul's usual salutation is expanded to indicate the defence of his apostolic status (Gal. 1:1); here, at the start of the letter, Paul states his concept of the apostolic office and authority - God is the source of it. In Gal. 1:10, 11, Paul further claims that the Gospel has no human source either. As J. B. Lightfoot<sup>17</sup> comments, 'The two threads which run through the epistle - the defence of the apostle's own authority, and the maintenance of the doctrine of grace - are knotted together in the opening salutation. By expanding his official title into a statement of his direct commission from God, Paul meets the personal attack of his opponents; by dwelling on the work of redemption in connection with the name of Christ (v.4), he protests against their doctrinal errors.'

In the narrative section of the forensic defence contained in the letter to the Galatians (see above, page 248), Paul gives some biographical material concerning his pre-conversion days; and then he goes into detail about his relations with the Jerusalem apostles and takes pains to clarify his relationship with them. Paul emphasises the infrequent contact with the earlier apostles, and that his relationship with them was not one in which he was subordinate to them.

J. Bligh<sup>18</sup> argues that the first two chapters of the letter to Galatia offer a vindication of Paul's conduct at Antioch where he



rebuked Cephas for betraying earlier convictions and going back on their agreement. Bligh says that Paul, while defending himself, is at the same time defending the Gospel as he preached it to the Gentiles. He does this firstly, by showing that his own doctrine is apostolic, both because he himself is an apostle, and because his doctrine was formally approved by the 'pillar' apostles in Jerusalem; and secondly, by showing that the doctrine of the Judaisers is false. Bligh points out that a notable feature of Galatians, chapters 1 and 2, is the way in which the whole argument assumes that Paul's doctrine cannot be accepted unless it is apostolic. This notion that 'apostolicity is the canon of orthodoxy' was widely used in the church after Paul.

In Galatians, chapter 1, Paul claims that his Gospel was revealed directly to him, that he was not taught by others, so his preaching was in no way incomplete or mistaken. He denies that he learnt the Gospel from 'apostles before him'. He says that he met Peter in Jerusalem three years after the Gospel was revealed to him, and that while he was there he didn't see any other apostles except 'James, the brother of the Lord'. In chapter 2, Paul continues to develop and underline his independence of Jerusalem.

J. H. Schütz<sup>19</sup> says that Galatians 1 and 2 should not be seen as Paul attempting 'to open up the apostolic circle and admit himself. It is his attempt to provide a rationale for apostolic authority in the absence of a concept of apostolic legitimacy which is sufficiently well developed to include within itself an implicit appeal to authority.'

In this narrative section of the letter, then, Paul establishes his authority: his Gospel has a divine authority over against the Judaising Gospel 'of men'. The 'proof' section of the defence is then argued on this firm basis.

The identity of Paul's opponents in Galatia has been much discussed among commentators. Pointing to Galatians 2:4, to the 'false brothers' who come into the community to spy, Professor Barrett makes the probable identification of these agitators with the envoys of James, noting that Gal. 2:12 shows that such envoys did at least reach Antioch and caused trouble there.<sup>20</sup>

A different view is taken by J. B. Tyson.<sup>21</sup> Tyson recognises the defensive nature of the letter to the Galatians, but he concludes that the opponents were Jewish Christians native to Galatia, who claimed the backing of the Jerusalem apostles, making a case for Paul's subordination to, and dependence on, the former.<sup>22</sup> Tyson's thesis is not convincing, for there are several pointers in the letter which suggest that the opponents came from outside Galatia, that they held a Judaising position in opposition to Paul, and that far from claiming Paul's support, they attacked him.<sup>23</sup>

An attractive thesis concerning the Galatian opponents and their background is that of R. Jewett.<sup>24</sup> Jewett briefly surveys the various attempts to identify the agitators in Galatia, and then offers his own answer which focuses on the evidence that they came from outside - from Judaea or Jerusalem, and that they were Jewish Christians; his conclusions turn especially on Paul's remarks in 6:12, 13, what he claims to be the motives of his opponents. Jewett poses the question why they should seek to circumcise the Galatians so as to avoid persecution. The answer he gives lies in the historical situation in Judaea, on Zealot pressures as the background for this 'nomistic' campaign. If such be the case then the agitators' demands were only partly motivated by the belief that circumcision and law-obedience were necessary - but as Paul sarcastically notes, they were

influenced by the desire to avoid persecution 'for the cross of Christ' at the hands of zealots looking for the purity of Israel.

Thus far Jewett's thesis is interesting but not altogether compelling, alternative explanations for the fear of persecutions can be adduced, for example, the possibility by Jews, or even by the state authorities: in the latter case the outward sign of Judaism as a 'religio licita' would protect against persecution.

It is the following part of Jewett's thesis that is the most appealing for he further postulates the cunning tactics of the opponents, who perhaps did not directly oppose Paul's teaching, but rather claimed to 'perfect' or 'complete' it - a form of 'domestication' of Paul. Galatians 3:3 uses the word 'ἐκτελειᾶσθε' which refers to perfecting or completing, and Jewett suggests that the agitators presented circumcision as a final step to perfection together with the observance of the Jewish calendar which they presented as associated with the Hellenistic 'στοιχεῖα' (4:9).<sup>25</sup> In the light of this, Jewett goes on to explain Galatians 3:6 - 4:31 where Paul argues against the nomistic threat of the agitators; and then 5:13 - 6:10 where he argues against a libertine threat within the community, especially 5:21 where Paul feared an indifference to ethical distinctions arising from libertine ideas. Jewett concludes that these two attitudes are not irreconcilable when one realises that the agitators played on these libertine tendencies within the church by presenting circumcision and the Jewish calendar as aids to 'perfection'.

Further to this suggestion, it seems quite credible that the Judaising opponents in Galatia had cunningly advanced their interpretation of the Gospel by claiming that Paul, who was subordinate to the apostles in

Jerusalem, had preached only part of the Gospel, and this they now claimed to complete, and with the backing and authority of Jerusalem. Paul countered this approach with a reasoned apology of his personal and divine commission as an apostle, independent of Jerusalem; he also discredited the teaching of his opponents with a clever defence strategy drawing out the 'old' law-bound implications of circumcision and observance of the 'old' Jewish calendar.

The suggestion of Jewett's as to the cunning of Paul's opponents, may be further taken up with regard to 2 Corinthians. Paul had already defeated their straight Judaising position at Antioch, at Galatia he had countered their presentation of circumcision and 'nomistic' interpretation of the Christian gospel; so then in Corinth they are forced to use a different approach; they simply attempt to discredit Paul so that his defence will hold no authority or compulsion, and so leave the way open for their presentation of the Gospel there.

### 1 Corinthians

This letter aims to 'build up' the church at Corinth, and to bind together the varying viewpoints there. Paul opens the letter thus: "Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God", and then goes on to further explain this in verses 17-18. 1 Corinthians 1:17 - 18 sum up Paul's line of reasoning in the letter; he goes on to illustrate further how he understands his apostleship in terms of his commission and duty to preach the Gospel, the Gospel being summed up in the phrase the 'word of the cross'. The notion of the paradoxical power of weakness, elaborated in 2 Corinthians, is already present in 1 Corinthians where Paul wishes to guard against those in Corinth who are 'puffed up', and may be susceptible to the show of ecstasy and powerful speech.

In 1 Corinthians 3:5 - 17 Paul expounds the relationship between himself and other teachers with reference to the 'building up' of the church. The real point of the section is that all ultimately relies on God, that there is no credit to be awarded to human achievement. The theme of 'boasting' comes to the fore in 2 Corinthians, but here Paul shows he was aware of the Corinthians' weakness to be impressed by what appears to be wisdom.

Paul returns to the theme of 3:5ff in 4:1, where he discusses the concept of service. He rejects the notion that anyone except God can judge his integrity, and denies that he will allow himself to be 'examined' by a human authority (v.4c). It is possible that behind this statement is some background situation in Corinth where Paul's actions or teaching had been questioned or criticised. (e.g. over the question of eating idol meat, or his not claiming support from the church.)

In the passage, 1 Corinthians 4:8 - 14 Paul uses his concept of apostleship to counter the tendency of some of the Corinthians to think themselves wise. Paul's authority and position as a 'called apostle of Christ' is not in dispute, but rather is taken for granted and used in a positive sense to explain the true way of Christian existence as Paul understands it. Paul describes the lowly life of an apostle, often faced with suffering and death; a picture which contrasts with those in Corinth who consider themselves wise and 'rich'.

The section which was concerned with the exposition of the correct understanding of Paul's behaviour as an apostle ends in 4:19 - 21, and after this Paul goes on to discuss questions concerning practical matters in the Corinthian church; but then in chapter 9, Paul

suddenly reasserts his apostolic status and authority. There is considerable disagreement about the interpretation of Paul's argument in chapter 9, and also its content in the letter. There is a sharp and abrupt turn in the flow of thought after the last verse of chapter 8, but a convincing explanation is offered by D. Dungan,<sup>26</sup> who argues that chapter 8 is an explanatory digression to illustrate the point of 8:13 - in chapter 9 Paul holds up before the Corinthians his own conduct as a Christian able to forgo a right due to him. There is also a certain defensiveness about Paul's argument in Chapter 9. Dungan points to verse 5 as showing that Paul and his associates were being compared with Peter, the brother of the Lord, and other apostles; and further, that some Corinthians seem confused as to why Paul's group had not accepted their financial support - was it because Paul was not a full apostle? Dungan argues that Paul takes this opportunity 'to kill two birds with one stone'. Concerning the question of meat sacrificed to idols, Paul argues that the legitimate right of the 'strong' ought not to be exercised if it proves injurious to the weaker Christians; and at the same time he takes as an illustration his own practice of not exercising a certain legitimate authority he possesses as an apostle when it could be injurious to the Church. If such an explanation is acceptable, then Chapter 9 does serve a purpose in the context<sup>in</sup> which it stands in 1 Corinthians. It is clear from 9:3 that Paul is offering a defence of his actions, for he states explicitly, "My defence (ἀπολογία) to those who examine is this ..... " and in the verses that follow Paul upholds his authority and his 'freedom' as an apostle.

The passage 1 Corinthians 9:19 - 23 is one which is important for understanding Paul's own missionary and apologetic strategy. The

passage could be misunderstood and taken to show that Paul was a self-confessed, unscrupulous charlatan, and H. Chadwick <sup>27</sup> points out that in fact some of Paul's contemporary critics accused him precisely of this - of a readiness to adjust his message to suit his audience, of preaching a gospel to 'please men' (Galatians 1:10, 5:11, 2 Corinthians 1:13 - 24). However, this passage can be interpreted in a positive way as explaining Paul's clever, mediating approach to difficult situations. As Chadwick comments, Paul's genius as an apologist is 'his astounding ability to reduce to an apparent vanishing point, the gulf between himself and his converts, and yet to 'gain' them for the Christian Gospel'. <sup>28</sup>

1 Corinthians 15:1 - 11 is a much discussed passage, and from it can be gleaned some fragments of information concerning the wider 'apostolic' traditions of the early church. Many questions have been raised by the content of these verses: Where does Paul find such traditions as a post-resurrection appearance to Cephas, and to James? Why is Cephas mentioned separately from the twelve? Were the twelve a fixed apostolic circle? Does only an appearance of the risen Lord qualify a man to become an apostle, if so, then what of the number five hundred? Was James classed as an apostle? Why does Paul use the phrase 'all the apostles' for in doing so it would seem that he excludes himself and this was contrary to his intention as v. 9-11 show? and lastly, what was Paul's relationship with the apostles 'who were before him' in view of the fact that he cannot resist an ironic 'dig' at them in v10?

Most of these questions have been answered, though not all satisfactorily. The first line of approach must be to separate the traditional material that Paul is quoting here from what he adds to it; in doing this the context of the passage, and the way it may be aimed at the argument on resurrection that follows in chapter 15 must be borne in mind.

H. Conzelmann's <sup>29</sup> starting point for discussing 1 Corinthians 15:1ff, is that Paul is 'pursuing the task of theology in the form of expansion of the creed'. The assertion 'you stand' implies that the authority and content of the creed are recognised as valid in Corinth, and this provides a common basis for the argument. <sup>30</sup>

1 Corinthians 15:1ff relates a resurrection appearance to Peter, then James, then to 'all the apostles', a group which is probably not identical with the twelve. Conzelmann notes here that, 'it seems that the important thing is that all apostles have seen the risen Christ, and this is accordingly definitive for the concept of an apostle'. <sup>31</sup> Paul's own vision is apparently meant as the last of the appearances of the risen Lord; Paul therefore meets this requirement of an apostle to have seen the risen Lord.

In 1 Corinthians, then, Paul uses his apostolic standing and authority to advantage in a positive way. He is not defending his position against personal attacks and accusation; although a defensive element can be found, this is attributable to some questioning and 'grumbling' about Paul's teaching, and maybe criticism of some of his actions, from within the church at Corinth. In 1 Corinthians Paul is generally able to take for granted his position as an 'apostle of Christ', and is therefore able to use this position authoritatively to back up what he says in order to correct, teach, and exhort his converts.

## 2 Corinthians

Much of 2 Corinthians contains Paul's defence of his status as an apostle. In 2 Corinthians 2:14 - 7:14 Paul defends his concept of apostleship, while chapters 10 - 13 contain a sustained polemic,



defence and counter-attack where Paul is fighting to retain his standing as an apostle before the Corinthian community.

Paul uses the same line of defence of his apostolic status in 2 Corinthians as he did in 1 Corinthians. Paul is consistent in his understanding of his apostleship. He encountered attacks on his conception of the Gospel and being an apostle, at Antioch and Galatia. The opponents in 2 Corinthians are aware of the strength of Paul's letters, and this may indicate that they knew of Paul's previous defence. If this is so then the opponents must guard themselves against a similar response. Their methods and approach would be modified. In Galatia Paul had claimed his independence from the Jerusalem apostolate, and now this is used against him; the opponents produce letters of recommendation originating from Jerusalem, and they sought to discredit Paul's status as a legitimate apostle.

In 1 Corinthians Paul had used his apostolic authority to establish his teaching, and in doing this he prepared the ground for his defence against such attack, for his personal position and his teaching are welded together, and his concept of apostleship as service was well established, if not accepted by all. In 2 Corinthians, Paul is able to reassert and expand his arguments concerning the nature of apostleship.

It is argued in chapters 3 and 4 that Paul, in his presentation of Christianity against the claims of Judaism, substitutes the significance of Abraham for that of Moses. Dealing with the Judaizing claims in Galatia, Paul uses the figure of Abraham to great effect, leaving no room for the Judaiser's positive portrayal of Moses and the Law. In

2 Corinthians Paul again faces Judaizing opponents. This time their strategy has been to attack Paul personally and deny his apostolic status. Paul must defend himself and his authority, as well as abolish any arguments his opponents may advance concerning Moses, and this he does in 2 Corinthians 3.

The questions of the 'Corinthian Correspondence' have been dealt with in Chapter 8, and I have argued that 2 Corinthians be considered as a unity; an apology in defence of Paul's apostolic standing in Corinth. Professor Barrett comments that by the time of the writing of 2 Corinthians, Corinth had become the mission field of a non-Pauline apostolate, 'ready as Paul was not to adapt itself to criteria of apostleship proposed or exacted by the mainly Gentile church of Corinth'.<sup>32</sup>

Paul may have been accused of 'commending himself' by claiming a personal authority instead of relying on the authority conferred by the church and established by letters of commendation. To such a charge Paul replied that for such a ministry as he had been entrusted with he was answerable only to God, and the fact of the existence of a church at Corinth was his commendation.

Paul argued for the superiority of the gospel over the Torah, and therefore of his message that rejected the Torah, and at the same time he proved himself not guilty of self-commendation.

The break after 2 Corinthians 2:13 had led many commentators to suspect that what follows in 2 Corinthians 2:14 - 7:4 did not originally belong in this context. The narrative takes a sharp turn at 2:14, the thought now revolving on the true understanding of the Christian

ministry and Gospel.

In 2 Corinthians 3 Paul continues the defence against any charge of self-seeking motives, and self commendation of his gospel and ministry.

C. J. A. Hickling in his article 'The sequence of thought in 2 Corinthians 3' <sup>33</sup> says that it was not the beliefs of his opponents as well as their slanders on his person and claims that Paul is here controverting, but only the latter. Hickling goes on to say that Paul was vindicating his entitlement to a greater respect than he was being accorded in Corinth; and Hickling expounds Chapter 3 with this straightforward hypothesis in mind; the personal rather than doctrinal direction of the polemic in this chapter is indicated by the fact that it arises out of Paul's reaction to the implied allegation that he lacks  
'συστακικὰ ἐκιστοῦν'.

Hickling notes that in 1:17 - 22, 2:14 - 17, and 3:1 - 3 Paul moves from a trivial starting point to a higher level of theological discussion on the nature of apostleship, and the relation between the apostle and the message he bears. This suggests that personal issues are at stake, that his opponents have been trying to damage his reputation, and Hickling can see no doctrinal points of difference raised so far. Hickling continues to see no shift from this purpose in the rest of the chapter, that it is all aimed at vindication of his personal status.

This insistence that there is no doctrinal polemic at all in Chapter 3 is not convincing, and Hickling himself is forced to admit to the problems this leaves in the chapter, and he concludes that something more than theology of the Christian ministry is at stake, although he sees the overall purpose of Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4:1 - 6 as vindicating Paul's own apostolic status.

Hickling's suggestion is essentially correct in that the overall theme in these chapters is Paul's explanation of his concept of Christian apostleship over against the Corinthians' misunderstanding of his motives and actions. But this is not the only theme present here, and the exegesis is too complex for any single explanation to cover all its aims and intentions - Paul expounds the idea we first find in 1 Corinthians 9:2, and will see again in 2 Corinthians 13:5.

Paul begins with a question that strikes a sarcastic note: 'Do we begin again to commend ourselves?' (2 Corinthians 3:1), and then by implication he denies that he has any need of official commendatory letters of a human source as his rival apostles produce. The following verses initiate the more important theme for Paul's viewpoint of the superiority of the gospel - the thought is precise and compelling and looks forward to the argumentation that follows, that the existence of the Corinthian church acts as Paul's commendation. Paul goes on to deny having self-confidence and self-sufficiency, saying that it was God who made him a servant of the 'New Covenant', not of letter, but of spirit. The theme of the contrast between Gospel and Law, between old and new, is no incidental in the context of 2 Corinthians - it is used in reply to the Judaising opposition. The discussion of Moses and the 'fading' of the Law in 2 Corinthians 3 leads to a clear affirmation of Christian freedom (3:17) Jews and Judaisers still have a 'veil on their heart', for they haven't turned to the Lord.

In chapter 4 Paul goes on to explain his ministry by contrasting it with that of Moses; the contrast between the 'fading glory of the law', and the 'transforming power of the spirit', not to mention a side-glance at his rivals in v.2 when he says:

" .... not walking in craftiness ( *κακοῦργία* ),  
 nor falsifying ( *δοκῶντες* ) the word of God, but  
 commending ourselves to every conscience of men by  
 manifestation of the truth before God."

The next verses continue this line of both defence and polemic combined; summing up his position in v.5: 'For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves your servants for the sake of Jesus'.

Paul goes on to describe his lot as a servant of Jesus (v.9) - 'persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed'. For Paul, proclaiming 'Jesus as Lord' meant proclaiming 'him crucified', and that, paradoxically, it is in human 'weakness' that the 'power' of the gospel is shown. The Corinthians' failure to understand him and his commission was a measure of their failure to understand the true meaning of the Gospel.

The passage 6:14 - 7:1 has been considered as an 'anti-Pauline fragment' interpolated into the text,<sup>34</sup> but it may be seen to fit well into the context of 2 Corinthians if it is a reflection of a past situation; Paul expresses his opponents' own views in a sarcastic mould. The touch of irony supports this, for Paul uses their own teaching against them; for their teaching and catchwords Paul uses but leading to an opposite conclusion.

2 Corinthians 10-13 comprises the 'proof' section of the defence contained in this letter. These chapters betray an urgent, sarcastic, defensive and polemical tone. Much of what Paul has in fact already said earlier in the letter is repeated in this different tone. Earlier lines of argumentation are powerfully restated employing rhetorical

technique to advantage. Paul defends himself, and at the same time, discredits his opponents.

H. D. Betz <sup>35</sup> discusses 2 Corinthians 10-13 as a self-contained apologetic unit. He infers the accusation by analysing the defence presented by Paul, and then goes on to discuss the relationship between Paul and the tradition of Greek humanism, maintaining that Paul was using rhetorical forms and arguments of the Hellenistic rhetorical tradition. Betz suggests that Paul wrote the defence of chapters 10-13 like a philosophical apology, answering a charge of religious fraud. This entails a self defence on Paul's part of his apostolic status.

The beginning 2 Corinthians chapter 10 builds up on ethical appeal. Paul 'exhorts' and 'beseeches'; while by implication (v8) Paul's opponent is accused of 'overthrowing' and not 'building up' the position in the community. In verses 9 and 10 there are suggestions that Paul has been personally attacked, but he is not drawn into a self-defence, but rather treats the attack on himself as an attack on the Gospel, and gauges his defence to suit. Then Paul counter attacks, and in verses 12 and 13 he compares himself with those who commend themselves, verse 15 implying that these intruders 'boast in others' labours'; and Paul states his position on this (v17, 18) - "He that boasts, let him boast only in the Lord". Here he sets a theme which is to be expanded further as the argument develops.

Chapter 11:4 tells us that the intruders Paul is dealing with, proclaim 'another Jesus', a 'different Gospel', and a 'different spirit', and in verse 5 Paul denies that he is in any way inferior to those he ironically calls the 'super apostles'. So the defence unfolds, Paul

compared to his rivals, and his claim that his self sacrifice marks him as the true apostle, and them as 'false apostles' (v. 12-13), who are 'deceitful workers'. The harsh attack continues, as Satan poses <sup>as</sup> an angel of light, so Satan's servants pose as 'servants of righteousness'.

Paul's counter attack is fierce and cutting and shows the strain of the situation. In 11:6ff Paul changes the tone and takes up a different line of approach. He aims to win credence for his case by focusing on the point that boastfulness and self-opinion are mistaken ways, and he goes on to relate the true marks of an apostle of Christ (v.27-30), and concludes, "If I am to boast, then in my weakness I will boast". In chapter 12 the argument continues to hang on to the theme of boasting and weakness.

Chapter 13, verses 3-4, restate the paradox of weakness = power, while in 13:5 Paul exhorts the Corinthians to examine themselves; as Christians converted by Paul they can hardly deny him the respect he claims.

We do not hear what the outcome of this is in Corinth, but if it is judged on the powerful rhetorical, apologetic content defending Paul's apostolic status, then it must surely have been successful.

Chapter 9. Notes - Paul's Personal defence of his Apostleship

1. J. B. Lightfoot - St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians  
Pages 92-101 - The Name and office of an Apostle.
2. Matthew 10:2, Mark 6:30, John 13:16
3. C. K. Barrett - The signs of an Apostle - For<sup>tr</sup>ress Press. Philad. 1972  
Page 34
4. C. K. Barrett 'Signs' op.cit. pages 52ff
5. C. K. Barrett 'Signs' op.cit. pages 52ff
6. K. H. Rengstorff: Apostolat und Predigtamt  
Apostolos in T.W.N.T.  
(Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuem Testament  
ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Stuttgart 1933ff)
7. n.b. A. Friedrichsen - The Apostle and his Message  
(Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift. 1947 3. pp. 3-23)  
  
Friedrichsen noted that the New Testament apostle is set within the framework of eschatology which accounts for development of the concept of apostleship in Christianity.
8. W. Schmithals : The Office of Apostle in the Early Church  
London. S.P.C.K. 1971
9. Timothy (Rom. 16:21, 1 Cor. 16:10, 2 Cor. 1:19) and Titus (2 Cor. 2:13, Gal. 2:1-2) are associates in the missionary work of Paul, but are not apostles. Similarly, Apollos is a missionary, but not an apostle (1 Cor. 3:3ff, 4:6, 16:2).
10. C. K. Barrett - 'Signs' op.cit. page 39
11. C. K. Barrett - 'Signs' op.cit. page 40
12. H. Mosbech - Apostolos in the New Testament  
Studia Theologica Vol 2 1950 pp. 166-200
13. R. Schnackenburg - Apostles before and during Paul's time  
(Apostolic History and the Gospel - ed. Casque)
14. R. Schnackenburg op.cit. Page 303
15. J. H. Schütz - Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority  
Studiorum Nori Testament Societas. Monograph series 26  
Camb. Uni. Press. 1975
16. J. H. Schütz op.cit. - Paul became in time an authority for subsequent generations even though his understanding of authority was not destined to survive in anything like a pure form. Paul had struggled with opposition in his age without the benefit of such specific institutional forms of authority as later became available'.



17. J. B. Lightfoot - op.cit. pp 97ff
18. J. Bligh. op.cit. page 44
19. J. H. Schultze op.cit. Page 29
20. C. K. Barrett - Signs op.cit. page 40
21. J. B. Tyson - Paul's opponents in Galatia - Nov. Test. 10 '68  
" Works of Law in Galatians J.B.L. 92. 1973
22. J. B. Tyson - op.cit

Tyson argues that if we are to identify Paul's opponents in Galatia we must limit ourselves to the internal evidence provided by the letter itself, and attempt to reason from Paul's defence to the charges and to the source of these charges. Paul's defence is that his apostleship is not of human agency, his contact with the 'pillars' in Jerusalem had been infrequent, that they recognised Paul and agreed not to require circumcision, that Paul himself did not preach circumcision, nor did he consider physical descent from Abraham or circumcision necessary for Christians. By reversing these defensive statements Tyson reaches a notion of what the charges against Paul were - that Paul was subordinate to the 'pillars' and tried to 'please' them, so his apostleship had a human source and not divine authority, that he preached circumcision etc.

23. The evidence which points to an outside origin of the opponents includes the unexpected shift of the Galatians (1:6), and that there was a struggle for the congregation's allegiance (4:17), and the fact that Paul refers to the agitators as though they came from outside and were separate (1:8-10; 5:12; 6:12-13). More particularly, that they came from Jerusalem, is implied by Paul's explanation of his relations with Jerusalem, for it indicates that they had access to information not possessed by the Galatians through Paul. The fact that the opponents alleged that Paul was merely dependent on the Jerusalem apostles shows a 'Jerusalem-orientated' viewpoint. And possibly their criterion of apostle as one who received a commission from the Lord points to Jerusalem as their place of origin. More general pointers for this conclusion are shown in Paul's polemic against Jerusalem (4:25-31), and his own reference to the Judaeon churches in 1:22.
24. Robert Jewett - The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation  
N.T.S. 17. pp.198ff
25. R. Jewett notes that the terms used of the cultic observances imposed (4:10) are not the usual Jewish ones. This indicates that the agitators wanted to associate the Jewish festivals with the prevalent Hellenistic ones.
26. David L. Dungan - The Sayings of Jesus in the Churches of Paul  
Oxford 1971

27. Henry Chadwick - All Things to All men (1 Cor. 9:22)  
N.T.S. 1. 1954/55 pages 261-275
28. Henry Chadwick - op.cit Page
29. H Conzelmann : A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians  
Hermeneia. Series 1975. Page 260ff
30. H. Conzelmann - op.cit. Page 260

The structure of the quoted text as Conzelmann sees it is constituted by two double statements; 'he died and was buried', and 'he was raised, he appeared'; and these two fundamental statements are each provided with a twofold proof, from scripture and from a verifying fact. Conzelmann's conclusion is that 'since there are echoes of the LXX, the formula originated in a Greek-speaking, Jewish/Christian community - more than that we cannot say', although he adds, 'That the formula comes from early times is shown by the fact that the decisive authority is still the immediate authority of the witnesses, not yet that of the church - the idea of tradition is not yet guaranteed by the idea of the church'.

31. H. Conzelmann - op.cit. page 279
32. C.K. Barrett - Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians  
London 1973 - page 40
33. C. J. A. Hickling - The Sequence of Thought in 2 Cor. 3  
N.T.S. 21. pp. 380-395
34. H. D. Betz 2 Cor. 6:14 - 7:1 - An Anti-Pauline Fragment  
J.B.L. 92. 1973. pp. 88ff

Betz argues that 2 Cor. 6:14 - 7:1 is an anti-Pauline fragment and representative of the opposition encountered by Paul in Galatia.

35. H. D. Betz - Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition  
Eine exagetische Untersuchung zu seiner 'Apologie'  
2 Kor. 10-13. Tübingen : Mohr. 1972

## Chapter 10

### The Debt to Paul

It is not to be thought that Paul's great achievements as an apologist should have left no trace in the succeeding generations, but to attempt to give a detailed study of Paul's influence on subsequent New Testament writings and the Apostolic Fathers is far too ambitious for the scope of this thesis. To assess and appreciate the effectiveness of Paul's apologetic, however, some consideration will be given to the influence of Paul on the writing of Justin Martyr.

Paul's main contribution to Christian apologetic lay in his arguments concerned with relations between Christianity and Judaism, and between Christianity and Hellenistic culture. In freeing the Christian Gospel from the confines of Judaism and Jewish legalism, Paul enabled it to take root and expand in the Gentile world. On the other hand, Paul's antagonism to incipient gnosticism within the Gentile church established the limits which prevented Christianity from becoming a 'gnostic' sect, and enabled it instead to retain its base in the 'historical' events and the Old Testament.

The early Christian writers who follow, or indeed overlap with the New Testament are the 'Apostolic Fathers',<sup>1</sup> and some of them show clear indications that they knew some of Paul's letters. 1 Clement and Ignatius both draw on Pauline themes and arguments in their work.

Clement has to deal with dissension at Corinth; so 1 Clement and Paul's 1 Corinthians not only had the same destination, but also shared a common purpose, to restore order and unity in a strife-torn church.

It is therefore understandable that Clement should often allude and refer to Paul's earlier letter to Corinth.<sup>2</sup> In his exhortation for the restoration of unity and order in Corinth, Clement had the perfect argument in 1 Corinthians 12, the 'one body in Christ', and he makes good use of it.<sup>3</sup> He uses Pauline language and arguments without acknowledging his source in any formal or explicit way. It was obviously acceptable to borrow a line of argument and not state its source; Justin later does the same.

Ignatius of Antioch finds himself involved in controversy with both Jews (or Jewish Christians) and docetists, and there are corresponding hints of Paul's apologetic procedures. Ignatius certainly knew a collection of Pauline letters, and he felt free to use Pauline expressions in his own contexts and to paraphrase Paul's words.<sup>4</sup> It is significant that Ignatius does not restrict himself to Paul's words or to an exact exegesis of what Paul said; he personalises Paul's words to his own situation.<sup>5</sup>

In Philadelphians 9, Ignatius struggles to put up a case against a form of Judaising; those he argues with have a different interpretation of the significance of the Old Testament in relation to Christianity. In reply, Ignatius summarises Paul's apologetic arguments concerning Judaism, the Jewish scriptures and law: they have value, but are fulfilled and completed by the Christian Gospel. Ignatius' arguments in a context of countering Judaising tendencies have a definite Pauline ring to the<sup>m</sup>.

It is in the second century, with Justin Martyr, that apology becomes a major and explicit concern<sup>a</sup>, for after a time of consolidation, there were new challenges and problems which called for apologetic and

theological thinking. It was natural that Justin should look back to Paul, the early Christian apologist, and take up his ideas and themes, although because Justin does not acknowledge his use of Paul's writings, it was generally accepted that Justin either did not know Paul, or deliberately avoided him.

The second century was facing the problem of relations between Judaism and Christianity, an apologetic for which Paul had already worked out. Another problem foreshadowed in New Testament writings, which again arose in the second century, was the relation between Church and state. In the second century this took on great political importance and occasioned the writing of defences and pleas for toleration of Christianity. Many of the situations and problems which provoked a need for apologia for Christianity in the second century had been foreseen and experienced to some extent by Paul in the first century, and the arguments he formulated then were still valid in Justin's day and Justin makes use of them and develops them further.

Eusebius writes the following about Justin after he has been referring to Pius, Anicetus and Eleutherus of Rome:

"In the time of these men Justin was at the height of his powers; in the garb of philosopher he served as ambassador of the word of God and contended in his writings for the faith. He wrote a treatise against Marcion and mentions that at the time he was writing the heretic was alive or notorious .....

The same Justin laboured powerfully against the Gentiles, and addressed other arguments, affording a defence for our faith to the Emperor Antoninus, called Pius, and to the Senate of the Romans, for he was living in Rome."

Eusebius goes on to quote Justin's Apology I.1, showing that he recognises the fundamentally apologetic character of all Justin's work. <sup>6</sup>

The work of the apologists can be divided into two main categories, the political or legal apologies designed to win civil toleration and acceptance; and the religious apologies intended to win converts to the faith and explain it both to them and to those outside. The religious apologies may in turn be divided into those aimed at pagans and those aimed at Jews. When applied to Justin's work, the apologies are both political and to some extent religious and they are addressed to pagans; while the 'Dialogue with Trypho' is essentially concerned with religious questions and is addressed specifically to Jews, perhaps with an eye also to Christians in the sense of providing a defence and explanation in the face of Jewish hostility and objection to the new religion. Since most of Paul's apologetic and argumentation is of the religious category and connected with Jewish-Christian relations, it is understandable that Justin should show extensive use of Pauline apologetic argument mainly in the 'Dialogue with Trypho', and not necessarily in the Apologies.

In Justin's First Apology, his aim is to allay the suspicion which surrounded the Christians, to refute popular accusations against them, and thereby to prevent further persecution. He means to explain Christian beliefs and practices, and he commends Christianity as the true philosophy. The Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic tradition (e.g. Philo, Josephus) had countered similar prejudice and slanders in the Hellenistic environment and Justin stands in this line of tradition, using similar arguments to present his case. He also uses Pauline apologetic arguments; in particular, he argues that the Christian message is the culmination and fulfillment of Judaism and the Jewish scriptures.

In Apology I Justin employs the rhetorical structure of the defence speech.<sup>7</sup> The second Apology as we have it, seems to supplement the first, and is relatively short. It is altogether more summary except in developing the doctrine of the 'spermatic logos' which fills out and expands the thought contained in the First Apology. It is in the 'Dialogue with Trypho' that we can detect Justin's use of Paul's apologetic arguments, though Justin does not acknowledge their Pauline origin.

The form and unity of the 'Dialogue with Trypho' has been variously discussed and broken down, but despite a bad textual tradition it is a well organised, structured unity. Justin makes use of previously compiled data, testimonies and arguments. It is a composition designed to comprise answers to problems encountered between Jews and Christians in understanding each other's point of view, to meet objections that were raised in doubt of the validity of Christianity, and to establish the truth of Christianity. It is written with a Christian audience in mind, therefore the prominent Christian bias is acceptable for it expounds the arguments which counter Jewish objection in reasoned ways by meeting Jews on their own ground, 'beating them at their own game' by using the Old Testament to prove the case.

At the beginning of the Dialogue, the phrase 'Hail o philosopher' serves as an informal address. The introduction sets the scene for the discussion, the characters are introduced, and the reader settled into a receptive mood:

"And he, smiling gently, said - 'Tell us your opinion of these matters, and what idea you entertain respecting God and what your philosophy is'." <sup>8</sup>

The use here of the term 'philosophy' points forward to Justin's argument that Christianity is the true philosophy.

The narrative describing Justin's own conversion to Christianity serves as a statement of the cause of the case. This is a characteristic of apologetic, using personal autobiography as a starting point, just as Paul does in Galatians. Here in the Dialogue, the 'conversion narrative' leads into and establishes concrete illustration of further argument concerning the attainment of true knowledge.

The motive for writing and the appeal to listen comes at the end of Chapter 8:

"If then you have any concern for yourself, and if you are eagerly looking for salvation, and if you believe in God, you may, since you are not indifferent to the matter, become acquainted with the Christ of God, and, after being initiated, live a happy life." <sup>9</sup>

The points of agreement and disagreement are summarised in chapter 29. Justin and Trypho agree that glory is due to God, and that the Old Testament prophets spoke the truth and are to be believed. They disagree on the need for circumcision, and other Jewish regulations, and on the interpretation of the scriptures. Chapter 30 proceeds to offer the 'proof' of Justin's arguments for Christianity, relying mainly on interpretation of selected scriptural texts, and their fulfillment.

At the conclusion of the Dialogue, one is left with the lasting impression of the stubbornness of the Jews in their refusal to accept the obvious and believe the truth, as Trypho remains unconverted even in the face of such overwhelming argument in favour of Christianity.



E. R. Goodenough<sup>10</sup> argues that as written disputes with Jews and diatribes against them existed before Justin, it is quite conceivable that the Dialogue was a compilation of material from such documents. In this case the Dialogue is a collection of arguments and not a record of a particular discussion. Trypho is a fictional character, so it would be idle to speculate on his historical identity. Goodenough holds that Justin has created Trypho, a representative Jew. This is a convincing argument, and it would be pertinent to inquire into the extent and quality of Justin's own conception and knowledge of Judaism, <sup>rather</sup> than Trypho's.

Justin's apologetic in answer to the criticism of the Jews was fundamentally the same as that in his answers to the attacks of the heathen. In both cases he represented Christianity as the completion of what had only been partial before. In both cases Christianity was the final revelation of truth; and Christianity as the full and final revelation of God was the foundation of Justin's defence.

Trypho objects to the claims of Christianity and urges Judaising claims instead: his is substantially the theme of the Judaisers countered by Paul in Galatians, so far as this can be gleaned from the epistle. Trypho calls for circumcision and observance of the written Law.<sup>11</sup> It is not surprising that the arguments used by Paul against such a position, should be repeated here by Justin, and this is in fact so, especially with respect to the Christian attitude to the Jewish Law. The relation between Paul and Justin is found to be close in regard to their use and understanding of scripture. E. F. Osborn<sup>12</sup> says that, 'in his use of scripture Justin remains an apologist. He is challenged to defend his faith against puzzled opponents (Dialogue 10.4)

In replying to these accusations in the Dialogue, Justin accepts the scriptures as the common source of proof, and typology and symbolism as a common method of interpretation.' In his arguments, therefore, Justin appeals to, and makes use of, Old Testament characters in the same way as Paul. In the Dialogue the importance of Moses is not stressed, and the Pauline argumentation concerning law is foremost.

In both the Apologies and the Dialogue Justin mentions the 'memoirs' of the Apostles.<sup>13</sup> Justin quotes from these 'memoirs', sometimes verbatim,<sup>14</sup> but usually the language differs from the words of our extant gospels. When Justin quotes from these 'memoirs', he makes no attempt to interpret them, but rather quotes them as historical evidence for fulfillment of prophecies he has mentioned.<sup>15</sup>

It must be asked why Justin makes no reference to Paul, and does not acknowledge the use he makes of Paul's writings. It may simply be the classical convention of indirect citation, but Professor C. K. Barrett makes the interesting suggestion that Justin does not acknowledge Paul as his source because of a measure of distrust of the Figure of Paul.<sup>16</sup> Professor Barrett refers to the second century anti-Pauline legends when Paul came to be seen as the proto-gnostic, bogus apostle, source of error and derision. Balancing this, Professor Barrett also shows that there was a pro-Paul school, he might well have been loath to attribute it directly to Paul in view of the anti-Paul school.<sup>17</sup>

Justin does in fact make use of Paul's arguments, and especially so when discussing problems associated with the Jewish law, circumcision, and Christian claims to the Hebrew scriptures. This field was one where Paul was eminently successful, and Paul's crowning apologetic

achievement was in displacing Jewish legalism from Christianity whilst retaining the latter's base in Judaism. It is, therefore, significant that Justin has to add little to Paul's arguments, even more than a century later.

Apart from any concrete allusions to, and use of the written word, Justin owes a great debt to Pauline thought as it developed in the Christian Church. Perhaps such thought is not always credited to Paul directly because it became so firmly embedded in the church tradition and doctrine.

Paul's method of countering Jewish and Judaizing claims and objections to his gospel was to take away the ground from under his opponents; by using their premises and arguments to a different end. This is the same in the Dialogue, where Justin presents Christianity as the culmination of Judaism, and Christians as the New Israel.

The question raised in the Dialogue, 'cannot a man believe in Christ and also keep the Law?', was already treated fully by Paul. Justin's answer is a version of Paul's answer: Christians worship the one God who has acted to save men through the incarnation of the logos, the new Adam. This argument, begun by Paul, seen here in Justin, reaches its full development in Irenaeus' doctrine of 'Recapitulation'.

Justin's attack against Jewish legalism is incipient in Paul, but is more developed and harsh in the Dialogue with Trypho. Justin's scorn of the history of Jewish observance of the Law is strong,<sup>18</sup> and this may be understood against the sharpening of the Jewish - Christian conflict over the years between Paul and Justin. Significantly, however, there are no new basic elements added to Paul's original line of argument.

In the Dialogue Justin was concerned to prove that the claims made on behalf of Christ are valid and true; that the scriptures point to Christ and the events of his life, and thereby demonstrate the continuity of God's saving plan for men. For both Paul and Justin, the main consequence of the 'Christ - event' is that now there is a new dispensation and a new covenant between God and man. Again, like Paul, Justin uses scripture to prove this in the face of Jewish claims that these same scriptures and the law were the final revelation of God.

In 'Dialogue' Chapter 10, Trypho raises the question of Christian non-observance of the law even though Christians claim to believe in the God who gave this law, and use the Hebrew scriptures as a basis of their beliefs.

Justin begins his answer by confirming this belief in the one God, the source of all - the 'God of Abraham, and of Issac and of Jacob', but this is qualified immediately:

"But we do not trust through Moses or through the law; for then we would do the same as yourselves.

..... For the law promulgated on Horeb is now old, and belongs to yourselves alone; but this is for all universally.

..... an eternal and final law - namely Christ - has been given to us, and the covenant is trustworthy; after which there shall be no law, no commandment, no ordinance." 19

Justin then supports this with LXX Is. 51:4, 5 and Jer. 31:31, 32; and then, to confirm that Christ fulfils these prophecies, he alludes to the works and miracles performed by Christ, and concludes: chapter 11:

"For the true spiritual Israel, and descendants of Judah, Jacob, Isaac and Abraham (who in uncircumcision was approved of and blessed by God on account of his faith, and called

the father of many nations), are we who have been led to God through the crucified Christ, as shall be demonstrated." <sup>20</sup>

Justin begins chapter 12 with LXX Is. 55:3f, and he goes on:

"This same law you have despised, and His new holy covenant you have slighted; and now you neither receive it, nor repent of your evil deeds."

Chapter 13 has a hint perhaps of 1 Corinthians 10:4 'that saving bath of olden time which followed those who repented', and then Is. 52:10ff is quoted by Justin who claims that this shows that Isaiah taught that sins will be forgiven through Christ's blood.

Chapter 14 argues that righteousness does not come by way of the Jewish rites - baptism which cleanses only the flesh and the body is useless, and Justin is sarcastic about the Jews:

"But you have understood all things in a carnal sense, and you suppose it to be piety if you do such things, while your souls are filled with deceit, and, in short, with every wickedness."

Chapter 15 ends:

"Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your hearts, as the words of God in all these passages demand."

Chapter 16 then goes on to deal with circumcision following the same line as Paul. Justin quotes Deut. 10:16f, Lev. 26:40 - 41, and then comments:

"The circumcision according to the flesh, which is from Abraham, was given for a sign ....

## Chapter 18

... For we too would observe the fleshly circumcision, and the sabbaths, and in short all the feasts, if we did not know for what reason they were enjoined upon you, - namely, on account of your transgressions and the hardness of your hearts.

## Chapter 19

..... This circumcision is not, however, necessary for all men, but for you alone, in order that, as I have already said, you may suffer these things which you now justly suffer."

Chapter 19 continues on the subject of circumcision, adducing examples from the Old Testament of righteous men who were not circumcised -- Adam, Abel, Enoch, Lot, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham.

## Chapter 23

"For when Abraham himself was in uncircumcision, he was justified and blessed by reason of the faith which he reposed in God as the scripture tells. Moreover, the scriptures and the facts themselves compel us to admit that he received circumcision for a sign, and not for righteousness."

The argumentation is characteristically Pauline, and it cannot be doubted that Justin knew and used the works of Paul, even though he does not acknowledge it. Paul dealt with the question of Christians and the Jewish law in two broadly distinguishable ways. He did this first, by expounding the whole relationship between Judaism and Christianity through Paul's own interpretation of salvation history

and the significance of the law and its place therein; and secondly by a positive exposition of Christianity in terms of the cross of Christ and the universal significance it held for mankind. Both these elements are contained in Justin's dealings with the Jewish law in the Dialogue with Trypho.

The first approach of Paul's in dealing with law included the positive portrayal and universal significance of Abraham and the promise, as against the negative portrayal of Moses and the law - Gal. 3, Rom. 4. Passages I have quoted from the Dialogue are ample evidence that Justin used this approach, and must surely have taken it from Paul. The second approach taken by Paul with regard to the law included the explanation of the relationship between law and sin. This Justin does not expand but he does make use of Paul's conclusion there from, that the old law is now obsolete, and like Paul he combines this with the positive exposition of Christian belief, the effect of the cross of Christ. The law points to the 'mystery' of Christ,<sup>21</sup> indeed everything which Moses established was the 'type' of that to come, and this is developed by Justin. The new covenant of Christ is eternal and universal, and only ignorance of the reasons for the ordinances of Moses would lead one to practise them.<sup>22</sup>

# Chapter 10. Notes - The Debt to Paul

1. The collective title 'The Apostolic Fathers' refers to the earliest 'orthodox' writers outside the New Testament - Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, Barnabas, Hermas, The Didache.
2. 1 Clement 47:1-7 - Take up the Epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle ....".
3. 1 Clement 37:5, 38:1, and 45:5ff
4. For example, Ignatius uses 1 Cor. 6:9 - 19 twice, in Ephesians 16:1 and Philad. 3:3
5. Magn. 14, Tral. 13:1 - 1 Cor. 15:8; Rom. 9:2
6. Eusebius : Ecclesiastical History IV.xi.7ff
7. Apology I:
 

Formal Address	
Introduction	- Chapter 1-3
Narrative	- Chapter 4-12
Proposition	- Chapter 13-30
Proof	- Chapter 31-67
Conclusion	- Chapter 68
8. Dialogue : Introduction
9. Dialogue. 8.
10. E. R. Goodenough - 'The Theology of Justin Martyr'  
Amsterdam 1968. page 90.
11. Dialogue. 8.
12. E. F. Osborn : Justin Martyr, Beiträge zur historischen Theologie,  
47; Mohr, Tübingen, 1973 pp. 87ff
13. In I Apology 66.3, Justin states that the 'Memoirs' of the apostles are called Gospels; and in I Apology 67 that these 'Memoirs' are read along with the prophets in Christian worship.
14. I Apology 16 = Matthew 7:21, I Apology 19 = Luke 18:27
15. For example, Dialogue 99 quotes Matthew 20:39 to prove his interpretation of Psalm 22:2
16. C. K. Barrett : Pauline Controversies in the Post - Pauline Period  
N.T.S. 20 pp. 229-245
17. C. K. Barrett - op.cit. page 236, 237
18. Dialogue 19
19. Dialogue 11



20. Dialogue 11

21. Dialogue 44

22. Dialogue 25

### Conclusion

This thesis has presented Paul in his role as apologist; his relation to the classical rhetorical systems and Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic tradition has been explored.

Judaism had produced a body of apologetic and propaganda literature in Greek. This literature aimed at answering criticism and refuting accusations levelled at Judaism, and, positively, at putting forward the Jewish cause in order to persuade and win over a Gentile audience. Paul used or adapted, changed or rejected, elements in the Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic tradition.

One apologetic technique used by Paul, which is found in the pre-Pauline Jewish literature, was the use made of the great figures of the past such as Abraham and the (re)interpretation of the biblical texts relating to them. Paul presents Abraham as the father and prototype of Christian believers, and uses the biblical narrative about Abraham to justify inclusion of the Gentiles (Galatians 3), and to prove his contention that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law (Romans 4).

On the other hand, Paul plays down the position and significance that the figure of Moses had been accorded in the Hellenistic-Jewish apologetic literature. This honorific treatment of Moses was probably one of the main arguments of his Judaising opponents. For Paul, Abraham had taken over the significance Moses had for them; Moses is synonymous with the 'old' covenant, the Sinai covenant, now superseded by the Christian covenant which, though in one sense a new covenant, could also be said to go back to Abraham. Much of Paul's argument is intended to counter Judaising claims, and Paul therefore emphasises the significance of

Abraham over against the 'fading' (2 Corinthians 3) significance of Moses.

Throughout his career as a Christian missionary, Paul 'The Apostle to the Gentiles', fought to solve the problems facing the expanding church concerning the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Paul was an apologist for the Christian Gospel as he understood it and foresaw its future; he commended and defended this understanding on two fronts- to Jew and to Greek. He realised that to move away from Judaism altogether could mean that Christianity might become a syncretistic sect losing the authoritative base of the Old Testament scriptures; while to retain the legalistic side of contemporary Judaism might mean losing the uniqueness of the Christian revelation and that Christianity might become a Jewish apocalyptic, sectarian movement. So Paul steered a delicate middle course, retaining what he considered the good points of the old religion (e.g. the Old Testament scriptures), while rejecting the restrictive ones (e.g. legalism, Jewish nationalism and exclusiveness), and aimed at a unified Christian church made up of believing Jew and Gentile alike: the new spiritual Israel, heir to the Old Testament promises through faith in Christ.

The Letter to the Romans is a deliberative apology, thought out and structured in accordance with rhetorical guide lines. It aims to persuade the Christians of Rome to accept Paul's understanding of the Gospel. The letter to the Galatians is a forensic defence of Paul's apostolic status and the Gospel as he presented it. Again, this Letter is carefully composed along the rhetorical guidelines for writing a defence speech in court. The Corinthian letters show elements of both the deliberative (1 Corinthians) and forensic (2 Corinthians) styles of defence.

Attacks on Paul personally and the questioning of his apostolic status, compelled him to give a defence of his own authority as 'apostle of Christ', and this in turn necessitated a positive exposition of his concept of apostleship. Paul defends his apostolic authority and the Gospel as he preached it, since for him these were inseparably together.

In the second century, the apologist Justin Martyr, makes use of Paul's arguments, even though he does not explicitly acknowledge his source. Justin relies on Pauline themes especially when discussing problems associated with the Jewish law, circumcision, and Christian claims to the Old Testament scriptures. This field was one where Paul was eminently successful; Paul's crowning achievement had been the displacing of Jewish legalism coupled with the retention of the latter's base in Judaism. Significantly, Justin finds it necessary to add little to Paul's arguments even a century later.

According to Cicero the most treasured talent of the orator is that of being able to adapt his way of speaking and the content of his pleading, to suit the circumstances and audience for which he writes. Cicero says that:

"The form of wisdom that the orator must especially employ is to adapt himself to occasions and persons. In my opinion one must not speak in the same style at all times, nor before all people, nor against all opponents, nor in defence of all clients. He, therefore, will be eloquent who can adapt his speech to fit all conceivable circumstances". (De Oratore 29.104)

This talent of being able to adapt to the mood and <sup>6</sup>reaction of the reader, is one which Paul could employ to a high degree and with great subtlety, even from afar through the medium of his letters. His defence and exhortation ranged from the harsh, bitter invective of 2 Corinthians,

to the clever, persuasive tactics of 1 Corinthians; from the uncompromising argumentation in Galatians, to the far-reaching, all-embracing persuasion in Romans.

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Abbreviations

A.B.R.	Australian Biblical Review
A.T.R.	Anglican Theological Review
B.J.R.L.	Bulletin John Rylands Library
C.B.Q.	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
H.T.R.	Harvard Theological Review
I.C.C.	International Critical Commentary
J.B.L.	Journal of Biblical Literature
J.Q.R.	Jewish Quarterly Review
J.T.S.	Journal of Theological Studies
Nov. Test.	Novum Testamentum
N.T.S.	New Testament Studies
Z.N.T.W.	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

